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# ED SPEAK

**4** 3.2 miles. That's how far I walked in four days at SEMA. And that's a lot for a pork pie-lover who shops at Jacamo. SEMA 2017 was a beast. You can see that for yourself by flicking to page 19 for our bumper report. We've picked out our favourite six builds of the show. Choosing between them was like picking your favourite Victoria's Secrets model. Impossible.

One of the cars that stole the show is the one on this month's cover, JJ Dubec's stunning NSX. Most of us haven't even seen a standard NSX in the flesh, so the fact JJ has got hold of one, then modified it and had it ready for SEMA is quite a feat. It's not like you can just order an exhaust and air-ride kit for a car that's barely rolled off the production line, because, quite simply, they don't exist. They do now though – and that's thanks to this very build.

I first met JJ back at SEMA 2015, when he was there with his Liberty Walk Ferrari 458. What a car that was, and although his toys might be a bit more exotic than the ones we play with, his enthusiasm for modifying is exactly the same. He's so passionate about tuning he's developed his own modifying ethos. He calls it F7LTHY; "Being a physician, I was raised and trained in environments that necessitated a clean, sterile approach. In the scientific and medical world, following rules and algorithms are important goals. Perfection is sought constantly. To me, F7LTHY represents the artistic, creative side of life. It celebrates the imperfect, thinking well beyond the rules and constraints often placed upon us. Yes our cars are clean in terms of build quality and precision, but they are also F7LTHY in terms of design and breaking purist rules."

Amen to that brother. The full feature starts on page 10. Enjoy.

Big Love,

*Jules*



**SLIM JULES**  
EDITOR

*"My favourite car of SEMA 2017 was the 1973 BMW 3.0 CS on the Toyo stand. Oof!"*

Seventeen years in publishing including a spell as a paparazzi, IMIAL Level 2 Mechanic, Poppadom Eating World Championship runner-up, Race National B Licence holder.

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**MIDGE**  
CONTRIBUTING  
EDITOR

*"For me it's gotta be either the slammed Porsche 356 or the body-dropped Ford F150. Pure awesome."*

Uber-short serial Gumballer and monster truck driver, IMIAL Level 2 Mechanic, built 12 feature cars, five cover cars, five rally cars, has a degree in pottery and an addiction to Red Bull.

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**INITIAL G**  
ART EDITOR

*"Were there any EP3 Civics there? No? OK then I'll go for the Ford Model A as it's from my era."*

Thirty years of design experience, champion archer and currently working on proving inflationary cosmology propagation, through vacuum energy.

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**GLENDIA**  
WEBSITE EDITOR

*"My favourite build? The Gas Monkey 280Z. Richard Rawlings' beard is immense."*

Social media guru, Gumballer, IMIAL Level 2 Mechanic, beard connoisseur, fully qualified lifeguard, purveyor of super lows and very large feet. Also likes cars rather a lot.

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Show of the Month

Words and Photos Steve McCann

## IGNITION SHOW 2017

*World rally royalty hit Glasgow. Hard!*

**T**he Ignition Show exploded onto the scene in 2016 with the Red Bull F1 team, Mark Webber and David Coulthard being the headline act. This time it was the rally gods taking Glasgow by storm.

The list of WRC-winning legends included Ari Vatanen, Stig Blomqvist, Markku Alén, Miki Biasion, and Timo Salonen. They were all let loose in their legendary rally cars and proved they can still put on a mighty show.

The live action was presented by FI's Lee McKenzie and BTCC star Paul O'Neill and included classic FI cars, hypercars, supercars, muscle cars, drift cars, race cars, modified cars and

hotrods. You name it. They were all here burning rubber!

As well as the full-on, live line-up, this three-day event has a strong indoor element too. Manufacturers lined up alongside car clubs and traders, giving the crowds plenty to see. Having so many rally legends together in one place and so much exotic machinery made Ignition another clear winner!

Having the chance to see Ari Vatanen make his Mk2 Escort dance, Miki Biasion getting his Lancia on three wheels and Jimmy McRae doing doughnuts in Colin's Subaru was worth the gate money alone.

We're excited to see what they come up with next year.



*Initial G's first car*



*Initial G's second car*













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# Liberty | Belle

*Sporting hips that won't quit and  
booty for days, this Liberty Walk NSX  
was the belle of the ball at SEMA 2017*









Some of the most impressive creatures have ludicrously long gestation periods. Baby giraffes can gestate for 15 months. Dolphins? Call it 18 months. Elephants might keep their mothers hanging around for nearly two years. If you've ever spent any time with a heavily pregnant woman, you'll know that this is a heinously long time to go without wine and brie. (Do elephants eat brie? Guess that's just one of life's mysteries.) But all of this is knocked neatly into a cocked hat by the second-generation Honda NSX, which took an impressive nine years to develop.

Even in the automotive sphere, this is a ridiculously long time. The Lexus LFA used to hold the crown for most-anticipated-supercar, taking so long to craft that they had to start again from scratch halfway through, when they realised the game had evolved while they weren't looking. But the NSX? Honda wanted to make damn sure they got it right.

It's an impressive set of shoes to fill, you see. The original NSX has rightly passed into the pantheon of icons – the first supercar to democratise the genre, to make supercars day-to-day usable. It forced Ferrari to buck their ideas up, and every modern performance car owes it a debt. Ayrton Senna himself was keenly involved in its development. So the new NSX had to be a sort of Senna Mark Two – and not like a rubbish Bruno Senna, but a proper champion.

It was way back in 2007 that American Honda CEO, Tetsuo Iwamura, announced a new supercar would be on sale by 2010. The following year it was canned, but then – somewhat mercurially – Honda threw the new HSV-010 GT into Super GT racing, leaving everyone scratching their heads and wondering where the NSX went. Fast-forward to 2011 and an answer came; the NSX was in development again, this time as a hybrid. A concept appeared in 2012, and the car surfaced in Gran Turismo 6 a year later. But where was the finished road car?

It finally showed its face at the North American International Auto Show in early 2015. Pricing wasn't announced until the end of the year and the first production car ultimately landed in 2016.

Worth the wait though, wasn't it? Gorgeous thing, it is. Of course, we don't deal with standard cars around here, and thankfully there's a world of lunatics out there willing to drop big money on a new and exclusive car, then immediately tear it to pieces and be the first to build something jaw-dropping on the platform. And JJ Dubec MD is one such lunatic.

Having got his hands on a boxfresh NSX – here badged as an Acura for his native Canada – the good doctor straight away set about working on a series of ground-breaking ideas. As such, what you're seeing here, ladies and gentlemen, is three world-firsts: this is the first second-gen NSX in the world to wear a Liberty Walk widebody kit, the



*What a machine*



**“It gets even more attention than my Liberty Walk Ferrari!”**



*Now, that's a good question...*



first to run an Armytrix titanium exhaust system, and the first to feature an Air Lift Performance air-ride setup. Because while Honda's R&D department may have put the hours in, there's always plenty of scope for improvement.

Naturally you don't just build a car like this out of the blue. There has to be some precedent. You'll be unsurprised to learn, then, that JJ is no stranger to garage-centric spanner-twiddling. "I've loved cars for as long as I can remember, beginning with die-cast Hot Wheels and Matchbox cars," he explains, echoing the automotive gestation of pretty much all of you out there.

"When I was in high school I was unable to afford much, but I loved working on cars whenever I could. One thing I focused on was audio as it demanded a lot of skill and knowledge. I learned how to use bondo, fibreglass, and paint. I learned about wiring and 12-volt systems, and a lot about custom interiors.

"Once I completed my medical and specialty degrees, I had an opportunity to purchase some vehicles that I had dreamed about owning for some time. The first of those was an R35 Nissan GT-R. I did full bolt-on engine and performance modifications, including a Flex-Fuel ethanol conversion and widebody Liberty Walk kit. After that build gained a lot of attention online, I was invited to display it at SEMA 2014 with Liberty Walk. Since then I've been invited back to SEMA every year to bring new projects. In 2015 I did a Liberty Walk





“Wataru Kato said he was a huge fan and agreed we should do the build”



**The first second-gen NSX in the world to wear a Liberty Walk widebody kit**

Ferrari 458, in 2016 it was a Jeep Wrangler Unlimited, and I brought the NSX in 2017.”

Aside from the glaringly stay in school takeout, this is a keen demonstration of what you can achieve if you maintain focus. So why an NSX, and why now?

“It was something I’d spoken to Liberty Walk’s Wataru Kato about a couple of years ago,” says JJ. “I knew a new-generation design was in the works, and was eager to see what the changes would look like. The new NSX had a lot of expectations to live up to and I suspected it would have a lot of interest once released.

“When Kato confirmed he was also a huge fan of the NSX and agreed we should do the build, we promised each other to do our best

to design and fit a widebody kit once we had a chance to evaluate the car and see how we could enhance the stock appearance.”

This wasn’t a case of just ordering in the parts and bolting them on, but an altogether more collaborative approach. JJ was involved from the ground up, knuckles bloodied and brain working overtime. The fun part was the language barrier which, along with the time difference, made the Canada-Japan comms channels rather tricky. But no-one wins medals for doing things the easy way.

It was the same case with Taiwan, where the bespoke Armytrix exhaust was developed, but JJ’s effusive about the excellent experience he had with them: “I removed my stock exhaust and sent it to them for research and development, and we collaborated on many design points,” he says. “My biggest stipulation was that I wanted a catless system that implemented their famous Valvetronic control, to open the exhaust or muffle the sound at will. One of the coolest parts of the build was that Armytrix flew out their main engineer to oversee the final installation in Vancouver!”

The development of the air-ride presented similar challenges, as obviously there was nothing available off the shelf. Fortunately JJ was able to work closely with Air Lift, alongside local friends at SerialNine in Vancouver, to implement the 3H management system and use custom-designed dampers and airbags with bespoke fittings. These were crafted by fabrication specialists Zero Division, along with Stance Suspension, specifically for the NSX. The results offer OEM levels of ride comfort and handling combined with the ability to tackle speedhumps and driveways – oh yes, and that killer stance when it airs out!

“The installation of the kit was fun,” JJ grins. “I cut the fenders myself, and had my eight-year-old help with sanding, prepping and fitting. We did the majority of the installation in Vancouver at MidVan Motors – a 47-year-old family-owned shop less than two minutes from my home. I then drove the car to my usual partners in crime at Phantasy Kolors in Seattle, who are famous for SEMA builds



**Only the best companies were used in the making of this NSX**



## THANKS

"I would like to thank so many individuals who have an instrumental part in making all my build projects come to fruition. Firstly, my awesome wife and children who support my creative, F7LTHY side and allow me to flex the left and right sides of my brain with these cool projects. MidVan Motors and Phantasy Kolors for their time and expertise ensuring the appearance and finish of the vehicle is world class. Liberty Walk Japan for entrusting me with doing the world's first widebody kit and SEMA debut. I am a physician and have only been doing this for about four years, and for them to entrust me with such a responsibility is truly humbling. I can only hope they are happy with the final product and my representation of their vision. Acura Canada and Honda Canada have been supportive of my project and I love that they recognise the aftermarket modification community and the love and respect we have for the brand reflected by the effort we put into our customisation projects. Air Lift Performance, Armytrix Exhausts, Nitto Tires, Savini Wheels, Vancity Vinyl, BASF and Glasurit paint and finishing materials, and JIN Performance. These companies provide such amazing support and products that I love to use. I am so thankful for their trust in me and my projects year after year."





### STYLING

Liberty Walk Japan/LB Works widebody kit and carbon fibre wing; BASF Glasurit paint – factory-matched to OEM Casino White Pearl.

### TUNING

3.5-litre twin-turbo V6; dual front electric motors; rear electric motor; Armytrix titanium exhaust system with Valvetronic control.


### CHASSIS

10x20in -10 (front) and 13x20in -55 (rear) Savini SV 67-XC 3-piece wheels (with brushed faces and inner/outer rims; clear finish on face; triple-tinted barrels; body accent colour-matched hardware); 245/30 (f) and 305/25 (r) Nitto NT 555 tyres; Air Lift Performance/SerialNine air-ride setup with Stance USA Nova dampers and ZeroDivision hardware.

showcasing their paint expertise. The largest hurdle we had to overcome as a team was that we received the kit in the first week of October and had about 12 days to get it fitted and painted before it was to be transported to Las Vegas!" As you can see, the truncated timetable didn't mean they cut any corners – plenty of midnight oil was burned in the pursuit of show-stopping perfection.

"I love driving this car," JJ enthuses, surprising exactly no-one. "It's so precise to control and the power delivery is strong and direct. It's getting even more attention than my Liberty Walk Ferrari!"

That's a statement which would normally cripple us with jealousy, but it's impossible to resent JJ because he's just such a nice guy – a true petrolhead with boundless enthusiasm and endless creativity. And while the gestation of the NSX as a model was lengthy and protracted, his efficient build of this project was almost record-breaking, particularly given the complexity of developing all those world-first parts.

Of course, there's no time to lose. He may be loving life in his one-off NSX, but JJ surely has one eye on SEMA 2018. What will he pull from his magical sleeve? There's no time for lengthy incubation here. The clock is ticking... 





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Who doesn't need a Hakosuka in their life?

# SEMA 2017

**JULES AND MIDGE JET OFF FOR THEIR ANNUAL HOLIDAY... ER, WE MEAN 'WORK TRIP', IN SIN CITY. VIVA LAS SEMA!**

There's just three things you need to know about the Speciality Equipment Market Association Show - it's the biggest, baddest and most important modified car show on the planet. Now, I'm not saying that other events aren't truly amazing, just that the sheer scale of SEMA dwarfs everything else your likely to experience. In my mind, it also perfectly demonstrates the only way to fully appreciate the unhinged craziness that is the US of A.

Of course, you can go to any cinema and see some pretty bonkers all-American culture. You can also hit the web for stuff like tractor pulling or monster trucks, and even watch Pat Butcher munching hash brownies on the telly. But to witness the full mentalism that defines what goes on across the Atlantic there's no more enlightening experience than getting over there and dragging your 'ass' to SEMA.

Back in November, their 51st annual event saw many things. This included 150,000 visitors, over 3 million square feet of exhibitors, thousands of top-notch builds and two English numpties with blisters walking over 12-miles a day. Obviously much of its popularity comes from the setting too, after all there aren't many more desirable places to host any event than Las Vegas. It's not like rocking up to some race track in the arse end of nowhere is it? The after party is almost as good as the event itself. Oh, and it lasts for a bloody week!

The real question then is; what can be better than the world's craziest car show in the world's craziest city? Well, we can't think of anything, so that's exactly why we got ourselves on a plane...



A McLaren MP4-12c with a 675 front end



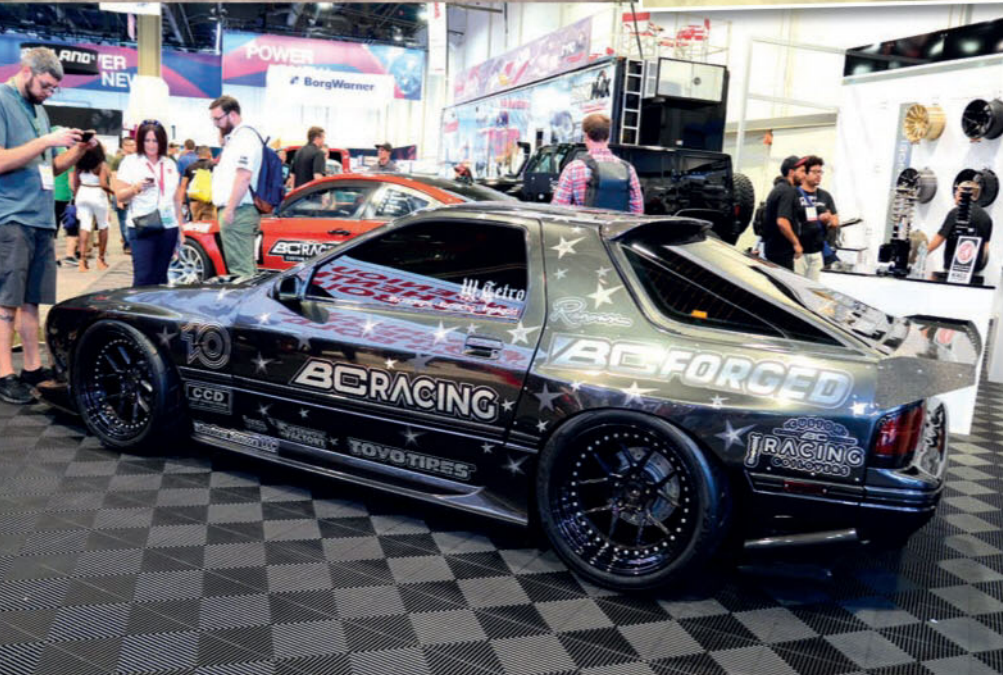
Sting Ray, Sting Ray da da da da da...



# OVER THERE: SEMA SHOW SPECIAL

## The cars

You may think that SEMA is rammed to the gills with modern American muscle cars, trucks and old skool V8s that don't work too well here in Europe, and to some extent you'd be right. Now, although they're great to look at, and even more amazing to get you inspired, we just wouldn't bother with an 11-hour flight if that's all there was to it. These cars may be a huge part of the US market but the truth is that SEMA is all about diversity nowadays. It's a global event, and that reflects in what's on display. I guess that 'everything' would be the word of the day. No matter what you're into, you'll find everything your heart desires at SEMA, and it'll most definitely be on another level of what you see anywhere else. In many cases the cars are built specifically for this show, before they go on to wow the rest of the world over the next season. So, if you wanna see it first, this is exactly the place to be.







## Six of the Best

### Porsche Cayman

It's true to say that 911s are as common as muck at SEMA, Caymans however seem to be a little more under appreciated. That's not the reason we love Dionne Mascunana's awesome creation though, we love this 2007 model because it's chuffin' mental! It certainly puts even the most bat-shit 911s to shame in the insanity department.

We saw the car last year when Dionne fitted the Pandem kit just 24-hours before the show, but this time around he's added so many other sweet touches, it actually made our teeth hurt. Apparently, he's spent most of 2017 finishing up the finer details and making that bonkers diffuser and canards himself at home. That's some mad skills right there.

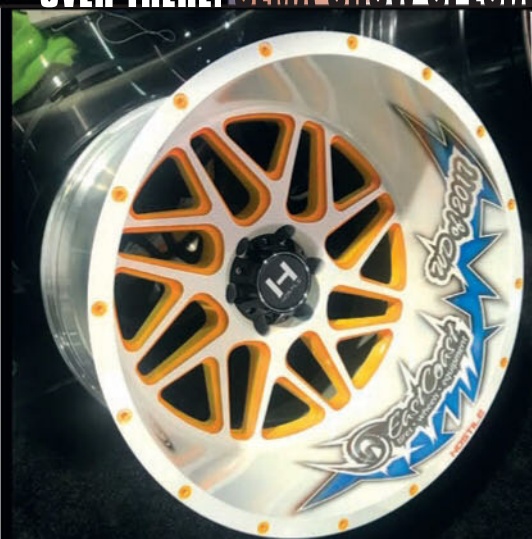
#### Top mods:

Pandem widebody kit; Work Meister Wheels; Toyo R888 tyres; KW coilovers with lift kit; custom cage, wing and diffuser; Recaro seats; CA shifter.





## OVER THERE: SEMA SHOW SPECIAL



### Got any wheels guv?

RSR, Backdraft, REGEN5, Rohana, Emergent, Enforce, Ningbo, Shandong, Rucci, MV, Markforged, Speedway, Walker, Shercom - ever heard of any of those? Probably not, but what they have in common is they make up a tiny percentage of the wheel firms who put on displays at SEMA. In fact, what with the ones you may have come across too, the sheer amount of wheel manufacturers from all around the world is always one of the most impressive aspects of the show. Put it like this, if you imagine the Birmingham NEC - that's about the size of the bit that's put aside just for the wheels and tyres. In fact, even though we're fully expecting it, we still find it surprising every time.

Still, everyone loves a flashy set of hoops and this is one event that certainly doesn't disappoint on the selection, this year there was over 500 booths packed to the gills with just about every size, design, fitment, material and finish you can think of. We seriously thought we'd died and gone to wheel heaven.



### Let's go outside...

One thing that always makes us smile about SEMA is that you get to see plenty of cars that would pick up the entire trophy cabinet at most UK shows, and that's before you even get through the front door. If you think inside sports a wacky selection of rides, well, outside just seems to take the biscuit. It certainly puts into perspective the common practise here in the UK of chucking your toys out if you don't get to go 'inside' at your favourite show. We'd be honoured to have any of our projects within a 30-mile radius of this lot...





## The Brits are coming...

Behind all the flash motors, unveils and celebs, it has to be said that SEMA is all about the new products. I mean, think about it, the clue really is in the name. What we have here is the most important trade event to see and be seen, THE place to show off your wares. That also means it attracts thousands of exhibitors from all over the world, covering every part of the automotive industry. When you consider that a half-decent trade stand will cost you upwards of 40-grand (without staff and shipping all your gear over), it's obviously quite the investment. What it does mean though is that, for the most part, you get only the best of the best. For a self-confessed product guy, it was seriously overwhelming, but what's amazing to see is that many of the most coveted products this year came from our shores. The Americans just couldn't get enough of firms like EBC brakes, who launched their new multi-pot callipers, and 3SDM who brought along a huge range of their UK-built forged wheels. It just goes to show that British engineering isn't just alive and kicking - it's still leading the way.



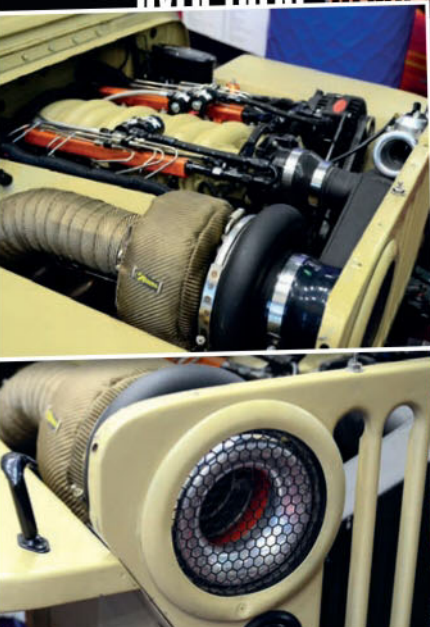
## The ladies

Speaking of dying and going to heaven, it almost goes without saying that all the companies break out the big guns when it comes to their promo ladies. We're not sure where they actually get them from but, being in Sin City, we have our suspicions... if you know what I mean.

Anyway, in our eyes at least, Lexani wheels got the gong for the best girlie of the show... even if some of their hoops were a little on the questionable side in the current climate. Copper plated six-shooters on a wheel? We've officially seen it all now!







## Stand of the Show

Quite obviously all the trade booths are amazing at SEMA, each company really does pull out every stop to lay on the best display possible. For once though Julian and myself actually agreed on the best stand of the week. That accolade went to the boys at Air Lift Performance for... their awesome padded carpet. You have no idea how well that went down after four days of serious hiking!



## The weird and the wonderful...

It just wouldn't be SEMA without some seriously gaga shit on show (eloquently put mate – Jules). It's just the way it is, and long may that continue! For us, some of this year's highlights included more mental rat rods and jacked-up trucks than ever before. It's impossible to get board of these bat-shit bonkers creations of course, but that wasn't all that tickled our cockles, not by a long shot. You see, in the US they seem to have the penchant for the odd engine swap, and we found plenty that were a little out there to say the least. Where else can you find a LS turbo-powered army Jeep called 'One Eye Willys' or a quarter-mile-bashing Daihatsu tow truck with a Honda K20 in the back? What will those crazy Americans think of next?



## The celebs

It goes without saying that SEMA is a huge deal on the social calendar, and that means the famous faces are always out in force. There's just about everyone you'd expect from the automotive world of course, guys like Magnus Walker, Chip Foose and Richard Rawlings. Along with loads of racing drivers, famous builders and presenters from just about every TV show going. There's also more than a couple that you don't particularly expect to bump into at a car show, and this year that included two of my all-time personal heroes. I mean, how often do you get to see Dozer Dave Turin from Gold Rush and R. Lee Erney (better known as Gunnery Sergeant Hartman from Full Metal Jacket) in the same room? I have to say my noodle nearly exploded. Sir yes sir!







# the Best



## Gas Monkey Datsun 280Z

What we like best about this collaboration between Gas Monkey Garage and renowned car builder, Big Mike, isn't so much that it's been on the telly or that it's GMG's very first classic Jap car. Nope, it's that it almost looks like a special edition that could have come from the factory. Mind you, that was the whole idea and explains the many original Nissan and Datsun parts taken from throughout the ages, stuff like the Datsun competition wheel, 240Z front bumper and, of course, that expertly tuned SR20 from a JDM spec S14.

Starting with a solid 1975 base car what they've achieved by getting Big Mike in on the deal, is a seriously high-end build that's a far cry from the patched together American classics and quick flips that made them famous. Get you some of that!

### Top mods:

SR20 engine; Garrett GT3071 turbo; Turbosmart wastegate and BOV; Hypertune manifolds, throttle body and fuel rail; AEM management; blacked out trim; Speedhut digital gauges; Datsun competition steering wheel and knob; custom trimmed seats; 9 and 9.5x17-inch RAYS Volk Racing TE37V wheels; Nitto NT01 tyres; Wilwood brakes; 240Z front bumper with Type1 air dam; Nissan fender mirrors; BRE wing; Leaf Green metallic paint.





# OVER THERE: SEMA SHOW SPECIAL



**Liberty Walk.** For when a supercar isn't super enough



**R30 RS Turbo Skyline** is perfection defined



## BMW E9 3.0 CS

Built as a homage to the Group 4 racers this 1973 E9 Beemer was one of the most talked-about cars of the whole event. With the bodywork finished just 3-days before the show, all fabricated by its owner Willy Izaguirre, this one started life as a stock 3-litre CS coupe but has been heavily re-worked to look like a super-rare CSL. BMW only made around 1200 lightweight CSL coupes in the '70s, and only 110 of those came with the famous 'Batmobile' widebody aero kit. Just like the originals, this one stands at around 7-feet wide and even needs whopping 15.5-inch wide wheels on the rear just to fill those mighty arches. Speaking of the wheels too, these BBS magnesium centre locks are nearly as hard to come by as a bloody CSL too!

This one also performs like a racer, in the front is the engine from the US-spec E36 M3, beefed up with the addition of a huge turbo to produce 550bhp. The sparse interior benefits from a whole load of carbon, a Nardi wheel and one of the custom knobs that Willy makes for a living.

So, what's next for this retro tribute? Well, there's a custom cage and a full-on air-jack system being fabricated as we speak. Suffice to say you haven't seen the last of this old skool monster here in FC.

### Top mods:

Turbocharged S52 BMW E36 (US spec) engine; custom titanium short exhaust and screamer pipe; E36 BMW CF gearbox; custom fibreglass widebody; BBS magnesium centre-lock wheels; Toyo Proxes T1S tyres; custom rear wing with carbon blade; rear mounted radiator; stripped and painted interior with carbon fibre seats; CA Tuned coilovers; BMW Nardi steering wheel; custom carbon fibre dash; custom gearknob.







## Look another GT-R!

We love a bagged, LB-kitted GT-R here at FC... and it's starting to look like everyone else does too! Now, it goes without saying that, once again, the Liberty Walk guys were smashing it. But SEMA really was absolutely awash with GT-Rs wearing their kit, basically one or two around every corner. Admittedly a lot of this was due to wheel and tuning companies jumping on the band-wagon and not being particularly imaginative in their choice of demo car. But, even so, the amount of big, bad Nissans started to make them look as common as Micras in a supermarket carpark. They were all still amazing motors of course, but the real question is; was there too many? We think it was getting that way - but luckily there we're plenty of other, newer Liberty Walk creations to check out too.



## Six of the Best

### Ford Model A

Joel Cannon's 1930 Model A Roadster was easily one of the craziest cars we saw all week, a real master class in the art of custom classics. In fact, the word immaculate just doesn't seem to do this one justice, it's a genuine Canadian work of art, badass in every sense of the word.

We're not quite sure what to rave about first either, the massive one-off hoops, that amazing custom interior, the chopped and stretched body or the 600bhp, blown LS2 under the hood. Sat on a one-off chassis that includes F1-style pushrod suspension, Durty30, as it's known, is less of a classic restoration and basically a whole new custom-designed car. There's not one part that hasn't been fettled over the past 8-years and it cost significantly more than a brand-new Ferrari to build. Apparently though, Joel is still happy to take it out for a regular thrash on the streets of Calgary where all the kids think it's some sort of Hot Wheels car. Then again, we suppose it's taken a lot of work to get this far, so it'd be rude not to enjoy it, right?

#### Top mods:

One off rose gold Kompression Wheels (9x21 front, 15x24 rear); 6-litre LS2 V8 engine; Vortech T-Trim supercharger; 6 speed tiptronic gearbox; Wilwood brakes; custom push rod suspension; stretch and widened body; suicide doors; racepac LED dash; Ebony hardwood floor; ostrich leather roof; one-off interior.





# OVER THERE: SEMA SHOW SPECIAL

## More Brits

The truth about SEMA is that every year you see brand-new trends in their inception, just as they're about to kick off. You have to go more than once of course, but it does show how some of the most popular standout ideas shift from year to year.

If 2015 was the year of Italian supercars and Porsches sporting mentalist kits from the likes of Liberty Walk, RAUH-Welt and Rocket Bunny. And 2016 a master class in supremely modified BMWs. This time around we noticed that top-flight British luxury motoring was extremely high up on the agenda too.

Now although, quite rightly, the new Acura (spelt 'Honda' in proper English) NSX was probably THE most coveted new car at the show, we simply lost count of the amount of modified Rollers and Aston Martins knocking around. But perhaps the biggest crowd-pleasers of all seemed to be the selection of mental McLarens strategically placed around the show. Makes you proud to be British, what what.

## HGK E92 Eurofighter BMW

We've seen some wild BMWs in our time but this carbon-Kevlar drift car has to be up there with the nuttiest, if not right at the top. I mean, even if you disregard all that composite bodywork that looks like it weighs about as much as an ant's left bollock. There's no getting away from the fact it's packing a 900bhp, 7-litre V8 from Mast Motorsport, an engine dubbed the 'Big Boy' that revs to an unbelievable 9000rpm. That's just what we like to see too, a lump so big you have to put the radiator in the boot!

Admittedly we initially thought the V8 was a dead giveaway, and that it just had to be American, but no - it's actually put together by HGK Motorsports who are based in Latvia.

To be fair these guys are well-known in the drifting community for their bonkers builds, including their E46 'CrocoFD' that was driven by Kristaps Bluss in this year's Formula Drift Championship. This car is reckoned to be his ride for the 2018 season, so we'll definitely be keeping an eye out for that.

### Top mods:

Mast Motorsport 427ci V8 'Big Boy' engine; Samsonas sequential gearbox; rear radiator conversion; Wisefab suspension with Nitron Racing coilovers; full carbon-Kevlar body by OCT composites (Latvia); carbon roof skin and window surround; custom cage; OMP seats.





## Stop moaning

So, is there a downside to SEMA? To be honest, not really.

We will admit some of the products are a bit on the silly side, 32-inch wheels and camo-seat covers spring to mind, and it's always super expensive, astronomical in fact, if you decide on parking every day. You'll hear plenty whinging about the queues for the Monorail, walking for miles and miles or having to wait for an Uber too. But, when you sum it up, they're all first world problems.

Our top tip for SEMA would be to enjoy yourself but, most of all, take your time. It's best to get there late and leave early if you want to avoid the queues, and don't forget you have 4-days to take it all in. After all, there's plenty of other stuff you'll want to see in Vegas while you're there. That's the whole point.



## Six of the Best



### Billetworkz Scooby GT-R

You'd be forgiven for thinking that Austin Barnett's Scooby here is the epitome of a super-clean showcar that never gets driven, but nothing could be further from the truth. This one may be undeniably slick and rocking the unusual choice of a Nissan Skyline RB26 lump, but it's about as 'street car' as it gets, especially at SEMA. Because it gets used on the regular too, it took a full week of detailing before it hit the show, that's dedication for you, eh?

It's taken Austin a couple of years to get his award-winning motor to this final stage but 'Rexzilla' still isn't as pampered as you might think. It's not only a regular at plenty of the US meets, but the perfect demo car for his company, Billetworkz, that makes a multitude of shifters and accessories. Definitely one of the craziest swaps we've seen to date, not to mention one of the most awesome.

#### Top mods:

Skyline GT-R RB26 engine; Borg Warner EFR 9174 single turbo conversion with custom exhaust and screamer pipes; Plazmaman intake; Air Lift Performance air ride system; Rundance BBK; Nessen Forged wheels; Takata seats and harnesses; widebody kit with front over fenders skinned in carbon fibre; carbon splitter, bonnet and front wings; roll cage; carbon interior trim; iPad install.





# OVER THERE: SEMA SHOW SPECIAL

## TOP INSPIRATION

One thing we always find is that SEMA is packed with personal inspiration for our own projects. In that respect, me and Jules are just like any other petrolheads, and most adapt at boring the pants off each other, banging on about the cars we'd like to own and what we'd do to them. The point is every year we come away with different tit bits, favourite cars and personal inspiration. So, just in case you were wondering, here's ours...



**Jules**

"It's no secret that I'm a Beemer man through and through and my favourite car of the show was the unbelievably immaculate '70s BMW CS on the Toyo stand. A close second though has to be the awesome RMD Garage E30 M3, which was right outside the entrance. I love everything about this car from the paint to the Rotiform wheels, but most of all I come over all funny when I check out that amazing Recaro interior, complete with gold eyelet work. I'd definitely like to try some of that on my next project."



**Midge**

"It's almost impossible to pick a car that I wouldn't want to own here, let alone one I do. But, when it comes to stuff I'd like to bring back to the UK, there's two examples that I couldn't help drooling over for hours. The first was the cleanest Porsche 356 I've ever clapped eyes on, that one kinds of speaks for itself. Bizarrely though, the other isn't a car at all - it's a beige, body-dropped F150. I've always been a bit of a pickup fan and reckon this would perfectly match my TT, both in colour and, erm, manly testosterone levels."



## Go Next Year...

As we know SEMA takes place at the beginning of every November at the massive Las Vegas Convention Centre, which is just off the world-famous Vegas Strip. As you can imagine, getting to Sin City and finding yourself a bed for the night isn't exactly a problem, book your flights and hotel together (through the likes of Thomas Cook or TUJ) and you'll often find it works out slightly cheaper. Do bear in mind though, that the prices are always inflated at this time of year because it coincides with Halloween, and trust us, the Americans take Halloween extremely seriously. It all adds up to some pretty weird antics in and around Las Vegas which, as with any US public holiday, will be absolutely rammed.

The only real problem with SEMA is that it's a trade-only event, and that means you have to be employed by some sort of automotive company, or be a member of the press, to get in. Security is tight and, understandably due to the shootings in Vegas back in October, this year it was tighter than ever. So, you'll need to make sure you're 'working' for a legitimate firm if you'd like to visit, I'm sure you can read between the lines on that one... if you catch my drift. Check out the official website [www.sema.com](http://www.sema.com) for all that essential info, and think about buying yourself some comfy trainers, you'll certainly be needing 'em.



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# CAN'T GET ME OUT OF MY ZED

*Even a GT-R wasn't enough to distract Nino Parello from missing his beloved 370Z show car. Now it's back in the rightful hands, he's made up for lost time and transformed it once again...*







## HOT RIDE: 370Z

*Nino won't tell anyone what hue his beloved machine is*



**T**he grass is always greener on the other side of the fence. The phrase describes our tendency to longingly view the objects or lifestyles we don't possess through rose-tinted spectacles. It's one of the biggest problems us humans suffer from. And probably isn't helped by the constant bombardment of advertisements for shiny new products that are constantly shoved under our noses.

But if you can learn to love what you already have, and even accept that things aren't necessarily going to instantly be 10 times more amazing if you buy something new, that's when you know you're really winning at life. One young man who's realised this the hard way recently is Nino here. He parted ways with his beloved modified Nissan 370Z a year or so ago to fulfil his spontaneous craving for the car's bigger brother – an R35 GT-R. As you can probably see, though, 12 months on and his 370Z is back on the scene, after he realised just what he'd given up.

You might remember Nino's 370Z in its previous guise before he parted ways with it. In fact, we'd be surprised if you hadn't: it was pretty damn hard to miss! Sporting a lime green Nismo-kitted body wrap and dumped on some bling blue split rims, the car made waves around the UK scene and far beyond for being one of the most uniquely modified Zeds in existence (we even featured it on these very pages of FC back then, too).

It may have been getting a lot of love, but with a couple of successful show seasons under his belt, Nino's attentions began to shift. We've all been there. "I ended up selling the car quite quickly to

a trader to make way for a GT-R as the perfect one came up for sale and it's always been a dream car of mine," he says of how his long-term love affair with his green companion came to an abrupt and slightly deflated ending.

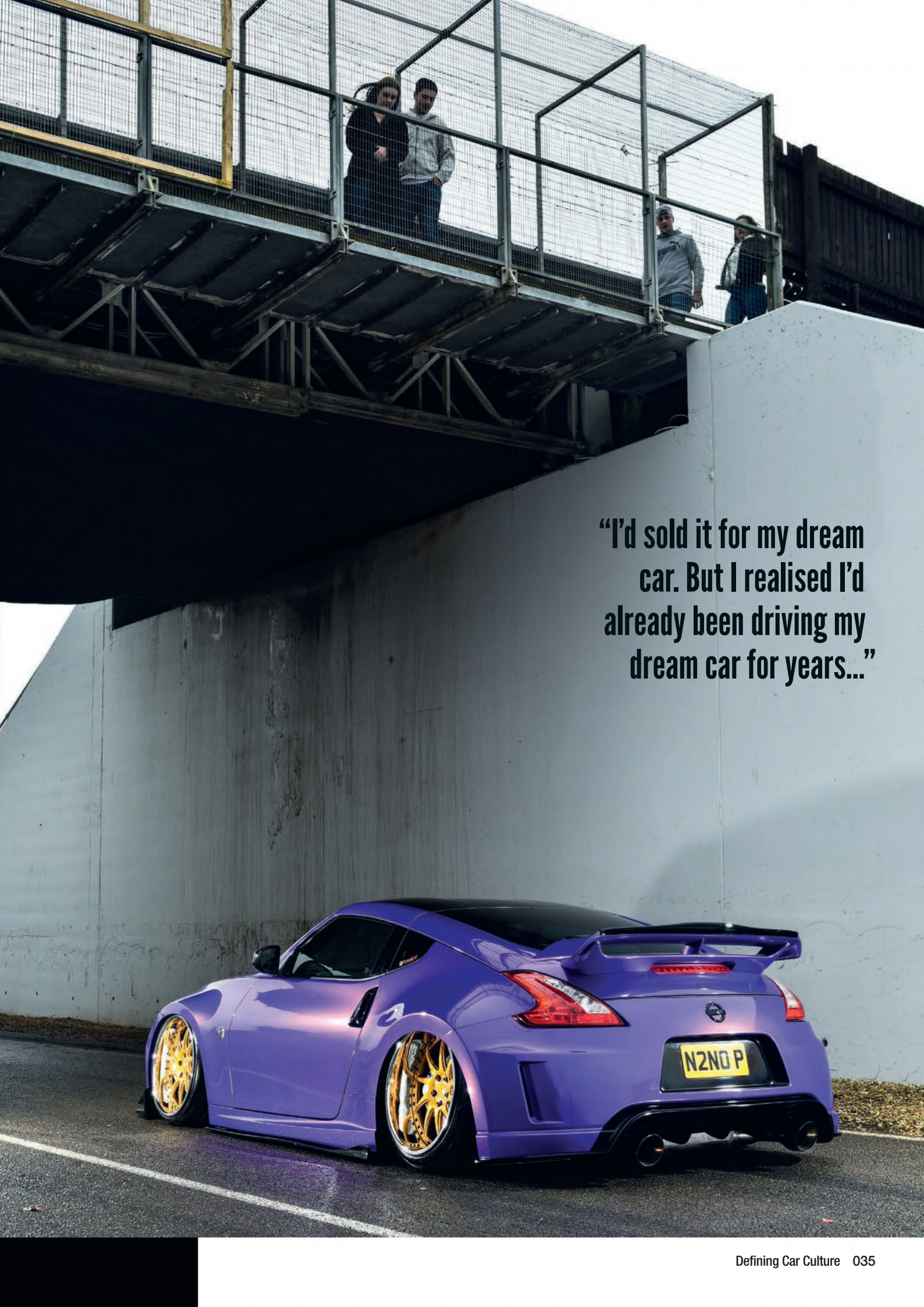
The tasty GT-R acted as a 25th birthday present to himself, with Nino initially loving the hilariously savage performance these boosted beasts famously offer. "It ran flawlessly for about a year, and then the gearbox and four-wheel-drive system both broke at the same time." Cue an almost five-figure bill just to keep the car on the road. This was the point doubts began to creep in about whether he'd made the right decision after all...

"All I could think was 'What if something like that happened again?' I was used to wrapping cars and putting them on air ride for this amount of money, but the GT-R had nothing to show for itself apart from the fact it worked again!"

Amazingly then, despite Godzilla offering so much more on paper, it took under a year for Nino's pangs to be back behind the wheel of his faithful 370Z to reach melting point. "I'd sold it for my dream car. But now I realised I'd already been driving my dream for many years. And all I wanted to do now was get it back and finish it off."

Luckily, pinning down where his old coupé had got to wasn't that hard – and not just because it was bright green! "The lady who'd bought it off the trade company I sold it to had connected with me on social media, sometimes asking me questions about how to operate the air suspension and things like that," he tells us. Making her an offer she couldn't refuse soon saw his most prized possession back in his



A purple Nissan Z sports car with gold wheels is parked on a paved surface under a concrete overpass. The car is viewed from the rear three-quarter angle. The overpass has a metal staircase with a wire mesh railing. Two people are standing on the stairs, looking down at the car. The background is a plain concrete wall.

**“I’d sold it for my dream car. But I realised I’d already been driving my dream car for years...”**



## HOT RIDE: 370Z

hands, with big plans to shake things up for the car's next phase already well and truly afoot.

A thorough inspection revealed the car had only travelled 500 miles in the 12 months the aforementioned lady's name had been on the logbook. But the fact it'd spent most of its time sat on a busy road meant the exterior was far scruffier than when he'd sold it. No bother, though, as Nino had always planned to switch up the way it looked to signify this important car-owner reunion.

"We peeled the wrap off and I drove it around in its original white colour for a while," he continues, keen to point out that this car has always been and always will be a devoted daily driver as well as an out-and-out show stopper. Attention was turned to setting off the rare Nismo flanks with an equally-as-rare CarbonSignal lip kit all the

way from Dubai. Sadly very damaged through transit by the time it arrived on British shores, he spent the time that the kit was getting repaired pondering what coloured vinyl wrap he should choose this time around.

With lime green a big act to follow, the thought process took him through several choices, including some of 3M's brand new colour range which had recently dropped. "These colours were all on back-order though and I didn't want to wait, so in the end I found a purple hue on Instagram that no one's used before. Everyone asks me exactly what hue it is and I still won't tell them as it took a lot of time to track down and get sorted!" Whatever the exact shade of purple it is, you can't deny it looks absolutely divine on the car's bootylicious curves, arguably even more memorable than the shade that came before it, too.

The next step of Nino's transformation revolved around the rims that'd take pride of place against the all-new purple bodywork. "I knew I needed some Avant Gardes back in my life," he grins, once again reaching out to the Californian-based split rim supremos who'd supplied his very first set of wheels for the car many years ago. "They needed to make necks turn," he continues, justifying the stunning 11.5in-wide F221 stunners he eventually settled on. With their twisted spokes set off in gold and the huge lips gleaming in chrome, they look the absolute monkey nuts now they're adorned to the Zed, especially when it's dropped to the deck on its Air Lift Performance suspension setup.

The finishing touches to the exterior consist of that repaired CarbonSignal lip kit from Dubai (which features a pretty badass rear diffuser), tweaks to make the headlights look even more evil, and some burnt exhaust tips courtesy of EMP Performance to fully freshen things up. Some say less is more, and it's amazing what a choice wrap and some killer rims have done to this unforgettable machine.

In case you missed our last feature on this beaut, the interior has been lavished with a tasty air tank boot install out back (complete with



F221 Avant Gardes

### 370Z AND STILLÉN EXHAUST

It might not be the twin-turbocharged powerhouse found under the GT-R's bonnet, but the V6 found in Nino's 370Z is far from uninspiring. Using some K&N drop-in air filter and a tasty Stillén exhaust system ensures that signature burble can never be missed. While a re-map to match that of Nismo-spec'd versions of this car means it's now boasting around 350bhp, which is transferred to those rear wheels.



Super-rare mods include a Nismo kit and a CarbonSignal lip kit





*The lavish interior also includes a tasty boot install out back*

### STYLING

Full purple pearl wrap; full Nismo body kit (comprising bumpers, sideskirts and rear spoiler); CarbonSignal fibreglass lip kit (comprising side skirt extensions, rear diffuser, rear-bumper valance and rear-spoiler extension); de-chromed and blacked-out headlights with full LED landing strip and halo demon eyes; 'Z' badges and doorhandles painted black; black roof wrap; windows and mirrors tinted; Killaplates removable numberplate surrounds.

### TUNING

3.7-litre VQ37VHR V6; K&N drop-in air filters; Invidia de-cats; Stillen exhaust system with custom EMP Performance burnt slash-cut tips; UpRev Nismo-spec re-map (350bhp).

### CHASSIS

11.5x20in Avant Garde F221 three-piece alloy wheels with gold faces, chrome barrels and carbon fibre inner barrels; Falken tyres; Air Lift Performance AutoPilot V2 adjustable air suspension system; Akebono big brake kit with white callipers.

### INTERIOR

Custom extended S3 gearknob; custom iPod and Bluetooth headunit control with upgraded amplifier; standard Bose sound system; custom NOS air tank install with neon lighting in boot.

a NOS sticker attached to really confuse the bystanders!). As well as some subtle ICE enhancements up front. After all, Nino spends a lot of time in his pride and joy, so it needs to be a pleasant place to chill.

With his heart content now he's got his one true love back in his life, and the lesson learnt that sometimes you'll be happiest with what you already have, you might not be too surprised to hear that there are only some subtle bodywork touches on the to-do list at this stage. "And maybe a twin-turbo conversion to make sure I never miss that GT-R," he laughs.

One thing's for sure though. We doubt we'll be seeing this work of art up for sale again anytime soon! 📺





# '90S REMIX

*Sam Curtis' Mk2 dances to a classic tune. Let's get a re-e-wind...*







**B**uilt not bought. What does this term mean for you exactly? Well, we happen to think it represents anything that someone has bought and made changes to. We ask because in the past we've known people to criticise others for buying cars that are part built or perhaps slightly modified and we think it's (to put it bluntly) bollocks. Any car can be fiddled with slightly. It doesn't mean it's built.

Sam Curtis bought this Volkswagen Mk2 Golf back in May 2015, having already received the engine conversion and a full respray. But did it look the same as it does laid out here in all its glory across these

glossy sheets of paper? Nah, did it 'eck.

Sam has always been into cars, but (admittedly) had never really been involved in the modifying side of things. Then he started working for car-cleaning product company Auto Finesse, and the modifying itch developed. It was around four years ago when he started working as a customer service/warehouse support bod for the company and shortly after is when his love for modifying came.

"It's all James' (AF head honcho) fault," he laughs. "The temptation to modify was everywhere. I'm still not that into old cars, really, it's mainly new stuff. I like classics as a weekend toy and a bit of fun. But, damn, they're hard work. When I started at AF, I

didn't want to do a car, but got coerced into it. I don't regret it, though. Driving James' cars and going to shows and stuff, you just can't help to get more and more involved and it just makes you want to do it yourself," he added.

The 1991 Volkswagen Golf Mk2 didn't come as standard, as I'm sure you well know from our little built not bought rant at the beginning. Gone was the original Volkswagen Golf 1.8-litre 123bhp 16v petrol unit and in its place was a KO3S 1.8-litre 20v unit. "It's not exactly anything special, but it was a good set-up and the whole car had been massively looked after, with a load of money thrown at it, too. Which was part of the reason I bought it. There was just so





much paperwork. I think I worked it out to be around 13k spent on it between '98 and '06 by the previous owner," Sam said.

The Essex-based warehouse operative knew he needed to change it up and change it up he did. "I had a load of plans. Drove it around for about 8 months after buying it and then just decided to strip it back to a bare shell, nothing on it at all," Sam told us.

When Sam bought the Mk2 it had been painted in Mk1 TT Aviator Grey. Change was on the cards, though. That was when the engine was taken out to make way for a bare-shell respray in BMW Longbeach blue. While prepping the car for paint, Sam also did a single-wiper conversion. The engine bay was then smoothed and painted at the same time to match the rest of the car. Ben Kmita at Silkmead Paint and Body resprayed the car. The rear end was also smoothed over during the re-paint. A custom Titanium leaf pinstripe now also features to the swage line, which was originally black from factory.

"Caring for paint is a massive thing. And I'm not just saying that because I work for AF. I've forked out for the respray, it wouldn't make sense to allow it to deteriorate. I machine polish it twice a year, to get it to

show-worthy spec. But to be fair, it must have a billion coats of wax on it throughout the year, anyway. It doesn't really need much to get it looking spot on, but it's good to do and to keep on top of it. It's handy to have a routine with your car, like with anything, I suppose," Sam added.

Once the engine was all back in and up and running. The 1.8-litre unit received a new ECU complete with remap. A Sprinter front mount intercooler was fitted, along with a top fill radiator and performance air filter. All engine mods equate to a calculated power output of around 210bhp.

With the bones now all complete, it was on to the dressing and finishing touches. The original front bumper was changed for a non-GTI unit without fog light holes. "Along with the new front bumper, we fitted G60 arches. I really wanted to go for a subtle look with the Mk2 and I think I've achieved that," Sam said.

Stance was pretty high on the agenda, too, of course. Sam went for Air Lift Performance struts, complete with a single compressor and a pancake tank. The pancake tank has been custom-welded into the spare wheel well. It's also had bigger air lines employed, along with V2 management.

"Stance is a must. That's one thing I love seeing at the shows we go to, the different looks people have gone for and managed to achieve," Sam said.

And what better way to finish off a back-to-basics build than a set of custom-made mixed splits. Sam went for some 16-inch BBS RA splits – which are the original wheels that would have come on the car back in 1991 – complete with 8j of width to the front and 9j out back. They also feature Radinox dishes to all four corners, with a two-inch lip to the front and a three-inch lip to the back. 10mm spacers have also been employed to the back, adding to its rear width. No wheel is complete without some rubber. So Nankang NS20s can be seen on all four wheels; 195/40s front and 205/40s rear.

Completing the outside, a custom-made Auto Finesse decal was added at the beginning of August ready for his Euro road trip overseas for RollHard Belgium.

To complement that 20v, a custom-made full exhaust system from manifold to downpipe has been fitted. It features a custom-made 2.5-inch exhaust system by R-Tec from the downpipe back, with dual exit tips.





**Mk4 GTI Anniversary Edition  
seats re-trimmed in black  
Bentley Nappa**



**"The only thing original in  
the car is the dashboard"**

**"I really wanted to go for subtle  
and I think I've achieved that"**








Sam went for some Mk4 GTI Anniversary edition interior seats, which have been re-trimmed in black Bentley Nappa, complete with perforated diamond centres – with all works being completed by Lawrence Gray (LG Trimming). The audio has also been uprated with a new Alpine headunit and speakers all round. “I love the seats. They’re so comfy on these long road trips,” Sam said. He also added a BBS steering wheel to complete the interior.

“Literally everything was replaced. The only thing original in the car now is the dashboard. Even the carpets, glass and all the rubbers were replaced. I might as well

have burned 20k, but I wouldn’t have had the memories I’ve had with it and you just can’t put a price on that,” said Sam.

Despite all the work that’s gone into the car, Sam still wants to do more. He tells us that he’d really like to have the engine out again, wanting to change the colour and to tidy it up.

Sam also said he’s considering other options, such as an old Beemer, but wouldn’t go into details... I guess it’s a watch this space moment. Well, we don’t know about you, but we’re sure looking forward to seeing what Sam ends up doing next. Cheers, Sam. Until next time! 

### STYLING

Resprayed in BMW Longbeach blue; big bumper without fog lights; G60 arches; Single-wiper conversion; carpets replaced; glass replaced, along with rubber seals.

### TUNING

K03S 1.8-litre 20v unit; running 210bhp; new ECU complete with remap; a Sprinter front mount intercooler; top fill radiator; Performance air filter.

### CHASSIS

Air Lift Performance struts, complete with a single compressor and a pancake tank; pancake tank custom-welded into the spare wheel well; bigger air lines; V2 management; 8x16in (f) and 9x16in (r) BBS RA splits, Radinox dishes (2in lip front and 3in back); 10mm spacers; Nankang NS20s, 195/40x16 (f) and 205/40x16 (r).

### INTERIOR

Mk4 GTI Anniversary edition interior seats, re-trimmed in black Bentley Nappa, complete with perforated diamond centres; BBS steering wheel.

### ICE

Alpine headunit and speakers throughout.

### THANKS

Huge thanks to everyone involved in it; big thanks to everyone at AF for all the support and dipping in and helping; Matt Waldock for the brains behind the build; Lawrence Gray @ LG Trimming; detailer Simon Andrzejewski for the unlimited nights of graft.







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## LUMILOR ELECTROLUMINESCENT PAINT, From £690 (starter kit)

Many, many weird and wonderful paint finishes have hit the pages of FC over the years, everything from chameleons and flips to metal flakes and full-on rusty paint. In fact, we thought we really had seen it all by now. But it turns out we were wrong.

This people, is what happens when a little bit of science and a whole lot of magic gets involved. Lumilor simply blew everyone away at SEMA with this stuff, even bagging its creator the prestigious Innovator of the Year Award.

What they've come up with is the world's very first electroluminescent paint. Basically speaking, it's a Light Emitting

Coating (LEC), or a paint that glows like a bastard when you apply a small electrical current.

Now, you'll be forgiven for thinking that everything's gone a bit TRON (or, for our younger readers, TRON: Legacy) here. But that's a good thing, because we like TRON. TRON has always kicked serious arse! And now you can make your motor look like it came straight off the set.

The idea is pretty simple, even if the technology needed to make it a reality is far from it.

Available in various colours, Lumilor is a four-layer coating system that's sprayed

or pin-stripped just like any conventional car paint. You can even whack over a top coat of your chosen colour. Then once you have your design, you can then wire it in and light it up like some sort of mental computer-generated Christmas tree. Turn heads? You'll break necks.

Unlike a glow-in-the-dark paint too, you can switch it on and off at your leisure, so it doesn't matter if you want the full-on TRON look, or just write 'Move Over You Twat' backwards on your bonnet.

The only limit here is your imagination. Is it just us, or is this some properly amazing shit?

[www.lumilor.com](http://www.lumilor.com)



# FRESH KIT

## RADI8 SD11, FROM £194 (EACH)

The bods at Radi8 are well known for dreaming up some of the craziest wheel designs out there and there's plenty more of the same with this bonkers new creation. The SD11 here is yet another trendsetter and one of the most unique monoblocks you're likely to see in 2018. But it's nice to see that it's not just a case of style over substance, because they use a low-pressure casting process, rather than more conventional gravity casting, making this one substantially lighter and stronger than just about any other comparable wheel.

We're loving the classy two-tone finish. We love that it comes in a deeper, more concave profile for rear wheel fitments. But most of all we love the fact you'll see nothing else like it on the market, certainly not at that money. A proper little stunner.

[www.radi8wheels.com](http://www.radi8wheels.com)

### RADI8 SD11,

- Sizes:..... **8.5 and 10x19-inch, 8.5 and 10x20-inch**
- PCd:..... **5x112, 5x120**
- Offset:..... **35-45**
- Centre Finish: **Silver Machined Face, Brushed Gold, Dark Mist, Gloss Gunmetal**



## POWERMAXED CHRISTMAS WAXES, £50

There's still time to get your mitts on one of these for the detailing buff in your life. Not only do these super premium LSPs contain a brand-new blend of carnauba and montano waxes, with five times the gloss enhancers of their previous offerings, but you can even have them personalised with a name, at no added cost, all ready for Xmas.

Available in three seasonal scents (Fresh Cranberry, Iced Gingerbread and Hot Cinnamon), these are a prequel to a whole new range of waxes that will be launched later in 2018. Still, at least we don't have to wait to get our mitts on these ones and, for an extra special festive treat, FC readers will receive a free PowerMaxed gift pack, just for entering FASTXMAS at the checkout. You can't say fairer than that, so Merry Christmas clean freaks!

[www.powermaxed.com](http://www.powermaxed.com)



## MORE AWESOME SEMA PRODUCTS...

### BBS RE-Magnesium Wheel, £3,500 (each)

Bona fide BBS hoops command some silly prices nowadays. So mash up some of that original Baumgartner Brand Schiltach magic with genuine magnesium race wheels, and it's obvious you'll be talking about a pretty penny... or 3500 of them to be exact. Per rim. Still, you can't deny these are the absolute bollocks. You'll need a Porsche 911R or GT3, or a set of their hubs at the very least, to get 'em under your arches. Once you do though, angels will fall, you'll instantly be more attractive to the opposite sex and you'll live long enough to tell your great grandkids you once had a genuine set of BBS magnesium centre-locks. Start saving peeps.

[www.bbs-usa.com](http://www.bbs-usa.com)



### Kleinn Compressor, £205

Air suspension connoisseurs will tell you the compressor is the heart of the system and without it, well, it's not strictly air ride is it? Most compressors are also pretty noisy and that's why this new waterproof item from Kleinn is a work of genius. This one is fully sealed and includes a filter snorkel. It'll work when fully submerged in water! You can mount these on the outside of your vehicle, giving more installation options, less noise in the cabin and more room in the boot. Pretty cunning, eh?

[www.kleinn.com](http://www.kleinn.com)



### DIRENZA MINI CONTROL ARMS, £150 (PAIR)

From the first generation R50-53 MINIS, right through to the R55-R59 models, we think you'll agree there aren't many better-handling hatchbacks right out of the box. If there's one thing we've learned from our chassis tuning guides over the past couple of months though, it's that there's always room for a tweak or two, and that's exactly where these top-quality alignment arms come in.

Whether it's a supreme track setup you're looking for, a decent handling improvement on your daily driver, or just a little more camber for those super-girthy hoops, these are designed to replace the upper or lower (or both if you're feeling frisky) camber arms and engineered for a huge range of adjustability. They also feature bearing-mounted inner pivot points (rather than bushes) to reduce static friction and improve suspension performance over the stock items. You'll be surprised what a huge difference such a simple mod can make.

[www.direnza.co.uk](http://www.direnza.co.uk)



### RAMAIR VAG 2.0 TSI JETSTREAM KIT, £200

As super-sexy induction kits go, the best-selling RamAir Jetstream has to be one of the best looking, but more importantly best performing, setups on the market. The range has been around for a little while now, picking up a lorry-load of accolades along the way, and we've no doubt there will be many, many more for this new VAG-specific kit.

Designed as a direct (and rather tidy OEM-looking) replacement for Mk7 Golfs, 8V Audi A3/S3s, 5F SEAT Leons and others packing the Gen3 2.0 TSI engine, this one offers much improved airflow and the sort of induction roar that's reserved for the more discerning VAG-tuning connoisseur. Featuring a high-flow foam filter, a silicone intake pipe with (constant 80mm diameter), and a heat shield to help maintain low intake temps, it's also extremely well priced, especially as it includes free next-day delivery. Nope, nothing *not* to love here!

[www.ramair-filters.co.uk](http://www.ramair-filters.co.uk)



### RING ULTRAVISION WIPER BLADES, £TBA

OK, so wiper blades may not be the most panty-dropping product out there, but you'll definitely need some good 'uns this time of year. Or any other time of year here in the UK for that matter.

These premium Ultravision jobs from Ring Automotive use their patented 'silent glide' technology and durable PTFE rubber to reduce surface friction and eliminate sticking for the very best performance on the market.

These guys know a thing or two about wiper fitments – they supply over a million of the buggers every year. But their new universal clip attachment (which covers 95 percent of cars on the streets) is what's really special here. It means less fannying about trying to find the right application. Just match up the length and away you go. Proper clever.

[www.ringautomotive.com](http://www.ringautomotive.com)



### ProCharger F-3X-143 Supercharger, £5,540

It's hard to tell from the picture, but this mighty new centrifugal supercharger is absolutely fappin' massive. Then again, we suppose it has to be about the size of an African elephant's love spuds because it's designed for custom applications that need to support a whopping 3500 horsepower. The art of overkill? Yep, but that's what makes it so frickin' sweet! Gawd bless the US of A.

[www.procharger.com](http://www.procharger.com)



### Racepak Vantage CL1 Cloud System, £460

Here's a clever little concept that brings track day instrumentation and data-logging into the 21st century. You can mount any smartphone (running the Racepak D3 app) in your weapon of choice and, via the Bluetooth-enabled CL1 box, view all the essential on-board information along with an industry-leading selection of real-time vehicle and track data. It's a fully portable, pro-style digital dash without the cost.

[www.racepak.com](http://www.racepak.com)



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# Tested Silverline 2100W Pressure Washer

## FEATURES

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- 2100 Watts
- Air-cooled Induction Motor
- Auto Stop/Start
- 5M Pressure Hose on Reel
- Pressure Variable Spray Pattern
- Detergent Dispenser



Even if you've never opened a bonnet or picked up a spanner in your life, there's one tool that tops the list of must-haves for any car nut, and that's a decent pressure washer.

Now, you don't have to be some sort of authority on detailing to see the advantage of having one of these stashed away, especially at this time of year. But there always seems to be a triple trade-off between the three Ps - price, power and practicality.

After all, the more car-focused pressure washers are usually premium products, particularly if you're looking for a large,

professional-style item that's going to last more than a few months. Most of the best quality units are in the £300-500 range and that's often feasible if it's your living, but perhaps a bit of a fruity investment for a spot of home car cleaning.

It also means that, if your budget is the most common price-point for DIY kit, around £100, the DIY market is exactly where your choices will be limited to.

Very often you'll be looking at a small washer and, although some come with surprising decent power levels, they're often

aimed more at cleaning motorbikes or the odd job around the house and garden. It's the hardware and attachments needed for bigger jobs that tends to let them down.

So, when we were asked to test a pressure washer for around a ton, we were pretty sure what we'd be dealing with and, it has to be said, weren't all that excited. That was until we actually saw it...

**PRICE: £104.42 (LIST PRICE)**  
[www.silverlinetools.com](http://www.silverlinetools.com)



## The Product

If you disregard price for a second, on looks alone it's obvious that Silverline have aimed their flagship pressure washer at the higher-end of the home market. In fact, when it comes to the list of pro-style features, not to mention the power this one serves up, it's about as close to a serious industrial cross-over item as it gets. For a unit of this size you'd always expect some serious grunt of course, and it certainly doesn't disappoint in that department. There's many more costly products out there that don't even come close to having a 2100-watt induction motor. And it's nice that it's on wheels too, an idea that simply shouldn't be underestimated.

With five metres of hose on that all-important winding reel, auto stop/start, a self-priming feature for use with water butts and a lance design that makes it easy to change the pressure and spray pattern, it's amazingly well-specced for the money. As good, if not better, than many products coming in at two or three times the price.

Silverline's smaller design efforts haven't gone unnoticed here either. There's some nicely packaged details, such as a telescopic handle (a bit like a suitcase), a fold-away winding knob and a few other simple touches, right down to a little hook for holding all your power cable. These all go a long way to making it easy to live with.

## Midge's Verdict

Admittedly, I'm more used to testing items of this size costing in excess of 300 quid so, for this sort of money at least, I was initially expecting a product that's a little on the flimsy side. Luckily though, that thought soon went out of the window as soon as I heaved the bugga out of the box. This one weighs in at a substantial 20kg, so it's a fair old chunk of kit, and all the parts are clearly solid enough to stand up to plenty of abuse. It's also bloody powerful: 2500psi is a lot, right up there with items used by many a professional garage or detailing firm.

There are one or two non-branded washers on the market that are almost the same size and similar money, but it's easy to see where the manufacturers have skimped on build quality and power to keep the costs down. There's no such trouble here. Even if you're a hardcore detailing buff or a professional valet, there's no reason this one shouldn't last you a long, long time. It even comes with a comprehensive three-year guarantee, and they certainly wouldn't offer that if they saw longevity as a problem.

It's not overkill for the home market either. Where this one really comes into its own is ease of use. The addition of all the industrial-style features means there's no messing about untangling pressure hoses and cables when you want to use it. And it all packs away neatly for storage.

There's also enough hose to get around your car without having to move the whole unit every three seconds, one thing I find extremely irritating with smaller washers. An excellent all-rounder.

**In a nutshell: seriously powerful, good build quality, a lot for your money**





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# THE FC HANDLING GUIDE

## Part 2

*More of those well-chosen chassis tweaks to get you cornering like a pro*

Last month we got to grips with the fundamentals of chassis tuning, kicking off part one of our guide with essentials like suspension, bushes and alignment hardware. We also covered the importance of setting up the correct geometry parameters, such as camber, caster and toe, specifically with performance driving in mind. When it comes to getting a supreme handling motor though, not to mention keeping it that way over any length of time, there's a few more things to consider. So, now you've ingested everything you need to know about bagging the right hardware and dialling in all those lovely degrees, it's time to get on to the next bit.

In this issue we'll be looking at chassis stiffening and two other modifying tweaks designed to get you around that little bit quicker – big stoppers, wider and lighter rims and sticky rubber.



## Performance Chassis Stiffening



One of the most important aspects of having the perfect chassis geometry is keeping it that way. It makes sense, right? You invest your time and hard-earned cash getting the right suspension and alignment parts, then you bolt 'em all on and set up the ideal geometry. So, you don't want it all going to pot when you hit that first corner. The truth is, if the other parts of your chassis can twist or move under hard cornering or braking, your geometry can quickly become far from optimal, screwing up your handling, the useable grip and all your hard work.

If it's all soft and floppy (Said the vicar to the nun? – Jules), the twisting force of the engine and transmission, when accelerating hard, can not only twist the chassis, but can twist so much it can rip parts like diffs and engine mounts clean off.

Now to some extent, polyurethane bushes will stiffen the mounting points, and we covered that in the last issue. But what about the rest of the chassis? Well, there are a few other things you can do to get it stiff, and keep there...





## Strut braces

These seem to be a simple chassis mod that's been around, quite literally, forever. Even before the '90s, when direct-fit items for just about every car on the market became popular, you could achieve much the same thing with little more than a length of steel and a few welding skills.

The humble strut brace is, in all likelihood, the most basic and most popular kind of chassis stiffening. Plenty of performance cars come with these as standard nowadays too, and even on a car with standard-ish suspension they can make a real difference.

The idea here is to simply hold the top (sometimes also the bottom) of suspension mounts together on the front or the rear. This helps them resist flex during hard cornering, keeping the geometry at optimum angles and sharpening up the handling. Strut braces are cheap to buy, easy to fit, and they really do make you quicker around corners. There's nothing not to love about this all-time great mod!



## Stiffening bars

These work in a similar way to strut braces, by simply bolting to existing points on the underside of your car, sometimes even inside the cabin, to provide extra rigidity to other parts of the chassis.

It depends on the car of course, but for some of the more popular performance models around, there are stiffening bars available for almost every part of the chassis. Some do their job really well and others are a little on the silly side. But they always look like they mean business. For the most part though, these can be a good option for road cars and daily drivers where you want to tweak the stiffness of specific parts but a full roll cage isn't a viable option.



## Roll cages

We're getting to the big guns now. While roll cages are usually thought of purely for safety, because they come with the distinct advantage of helping stop you crashing through the pearly gates upside-down and on fire, they're also engineered to all but eliminate chassis flex. The main reason racing drivers have a full cage is because it makes their car handle better. If that wasn't the case and the regulations allowed it, many wouldn't want the extra weight at all. It's worth remembering that most racing drivers (especially back in the day) are totally nuts, have balls made of diamond tipped titanium and don't really care about personal safety.

Anyway, whether you're looking at a bolt-in item or some sort of full-on weld-in job, to some degree it will have the task of triangulating certain points on the chassis for the ultimate in stiffness. This ultimately improves handling and steering response.

Many specific-fit cages (or 'weld yourself' cage kits) are available off-the-shelf from companies like Safety Devices or OMP. There's also the option of a race car-style custom cage where the only real limit is your imagination. As in the world of motorsport, many cages are built to tie in other chassis points like the front suspension turrets, and with loads of other strengthening bars and cross-braces. These can even get into the realms of 'space-framing', where everything's so well tied together that (technically at least) the bodywork is only there to satisfy racing regulations, or to simply make it look like a production car rather than some sort of dune buggy. If you look at drag racing funny cars for instance, the body is little more than a composite shell.

As with anything, there is a downside. Cages can make your car a little too stiff for use on certain surfaces, often surfaces like our bumpy British roads. Compliance is the word of the day here. How stiff you go is all down to application, and nearly always a trade-off with how comfortable you'd like to be.



## Seam welding

You'll rarely see seam welding outside the realms of full-on race car builds and that's because it usually involves stripping the whole car back to a shell. That's not to say it can't be useful for hardcore applications though. The idea is to add stitch welds (or sometimes spot welds) along all the joints in the chassis. In most cases they pay particular attention to the areas where suspension and cages are mounted. The result, as you'd imagine, is a marked improvement in chassis stiffness. You really have to know what you're doing with this one though.



## Foaming

It may be a rare process but 'foaming' still goes on in various race fraternities. The process is pretty simple and involves the use of heavy duty expanding foam which is used to fill voids like pillars and sills. When the foam sets it adds a significant degree of rigidity and, because the foam is relatively light, it doesn't pile on the pounds too much.

## Top contacts

Hardrace, [www.hardrace.co.uk](http://www.hardrace.co.uk)  
Safety Devices, [www.safetydevices.com](http://www.safetydevices.com)  
SuperPro, [www.superpro.eu.com](http://www.superpro.eu.com)  
Direnza, [www.direnza.co.uk](http://www.direnza.co.uk)  
Japspeed, [www.japspeed.co.uk](http://www.japspeed.co.uk)



# Brakes

Now, while having better brakes doesn't technically make your car handle better (and by that we mean they won't get you out of a corner quicker), it's a vital chassis mod that will make your car real-world faster. The idea here is that you spend much less time actually getting to the corners. With more powerful stoppers you can hit the brakes later, stop quicker and get back on the gas faster. All that adds up to less time spent slowing down and more time accelerating. There is of course the other aspect of having decent stoppers, and that's that they'll be less susceptible to the dreaded fade, the term for when the brakes overheat and lose their effectiveness. In short, better brakes are ultimately safer. So, here's what you need to know...



## Brake bias

Science tells us that when you hit the anchors, the momentum of the vehicle will cause most of the weight to shift forwards. This is why the vast majority of cars have far larger brakes on the front than the back (especially those with the engine in the front too). In fact, up to 80 percent of the stopping power comes from the front brakes, and that's why they'll nearly always be a disc and calliper configuration. Of course, there are plenty of smaller cars knocking about that still use drum brakes on the rear, but as it's the front where most of the braking force is needed, this doesn't cause a problem. Besides, nowadays most manufacturers opt for discs all round – not just for performance models, more as a matter of course.

When it comes to drum brakes too, they are actually pretty effective for a short time. Their big problem is they have trouble dissipating the heat generated under hard use, which can make them susceptible to fading, sometimes almost out of nowhere. Manufacturers stopped using drums up front decades ago, so unless you have some sort of '50s or '60s classic, a guide to uprated drums and brake shoes won't be too helpful. You'll most likely want to convert them to discs anyway. For that reason, we'll concentrate on disc and calliper setups.



## Upgrading your brakes

The options for brake upgrades will usually fall into one of two categories; direct-replacement parts and conversions. Most common, and usually least expensive, is simply installing direct-replacement performance discs and pads. These will be uprated hardware exactly the same size and shape and as your standard items, usually with some sort of surface treatment on the discs and an uprated pad compound.

Conversions can be a little more complicated and range from OEM+ upgrades (utilising bigger brakes off a higher-spec, donor car) to vehicle specific big brake kits (BBKs) with multi-pot callipers, huge discs and all the trimmings.



## Sizes

The much fact of the matter is that bigger is better for performance. A larger disc has more surface area for the pad to bite and to dissipate heat. You also get more leverage when the calliper clamps down on the outside edge. It's the same story with larger fixed callipers, usually these will be able to produce much more clamping force on the pads.

So, what are the limitations? Well, the clearance would be the biggest. It's no good having whopping great brakes if you can't get them inside your hoops.

It's also worth remembering that while many BBKs offer lightweight alloy callipers, putting discs the size of small moons on a car that doesn't need it can increase weight. As with most things, the key for optimum performance is finding the right balance.

## Uprated pad compounds

The size and shape of the brake pads you use will always be specific to your vehicle (or your aftermarket callipers).

What makes a pad work is the friction surface that comes into contact with the disc. The makeup of this part of the pad is known as the compound and different types will not only give hugely different braking characteristics, but they'll all be designed for different operating temperatures and durability.

Both standard and uprated pads use compounds containing a huge range of ceramic, semi-metallic and organic materials, but what's most important here is their hardness. A soft compound will be suited to aggressive track driving but will wear out pretty quickly compared to a harder compound. A hard compound on the other hand, will be more likely to succumb to fade under extreme use, due to the temperatures involved.

It's worth remembering that heat is good and bad for brake pads. They need some to work and, in some cases, not enough can be just as devastating as too much. Many hardcore race pads don't work effectively until they're hot, which doesn't lend itself too well to normal driving on the road. Again, you have to find the right balance, according to how you'll be using the car.





## Brake hoses

These are the flexible pipes that carry the hydraulic fluid to the callipers from the solid copper 'hard lines' that snake from the master cylinder to all four corners of the car. On most standard vehicles these hoses are made from durable rubber but this comes with one inherent problem: they can often flex or bulge under the immense fluid pressure caused by constant heavy braking. This is why many track or fast road drivers choose to replace them with a set of aftermarket braided steel lines. Steel hoses are designed to resist much higher pressures and give you a less spongy feel when you hit the middle pedal. There are plenty of kits on the market and they start at around just 40 quid a pop – that's not a lot for a proper race car mod, eh?



## Brake fluid

It's a common misconception that any old brake fluid will do, and that you can leave it in there forever. In reality though, brake fluid is a hygroscopic liquid, which means it absorbs moisture from the atmosphere over time. This moisture eventually lowers its effective boiling point so, as it's a part of the system that needs to be ultra-resilient to the high temperatures transferred from the disc, pads and callipers, fluid that's been working its way around the system since the car rolled off the production line obviously isn't ideal for performance. This is the reason that regular testing and fluid changes are essential to keep stopping power at an optimum.



Brake fluid temperature resistance is rated on the DOT scale and the higher the number on the bottle, the higher its effective boiling point. Standard spec fluids all come in at around DOT 3 or 4 nowadays, but as you'd imagine, the many performance formulas on the market designed for more extreme use generally have a higher DOT number. DOT 5 fluids have become a common upgrade in recent years and there's even a few hardcore DOT 6 racing fluids out there now too.

## Top contacts

EBC, [www.ebcbrakes.com](http://www.ebcbrakes.com)  
MTEC Brakes, [www.mtecbrakes.com](http://www.mtecbrakes.com)  
HiSpec Motorsport, [www.hispecmotorsport.co.uk](http://www.hispecmotorsport.co.uk)

# Tyres

No matter how much blood, sweat and cold hard cash you've put into getting the pinnacle of chassis setups, it's worth remembering there are only ever four small patches of rubber connecting it to the tarmac. That's why tyres are so important for performance driving and why getting the best set for your application is absolutely crucial to bring all your handling tweaks together. But what's best for you and what do all those numbers mean? Well, here goes...



## Compounds

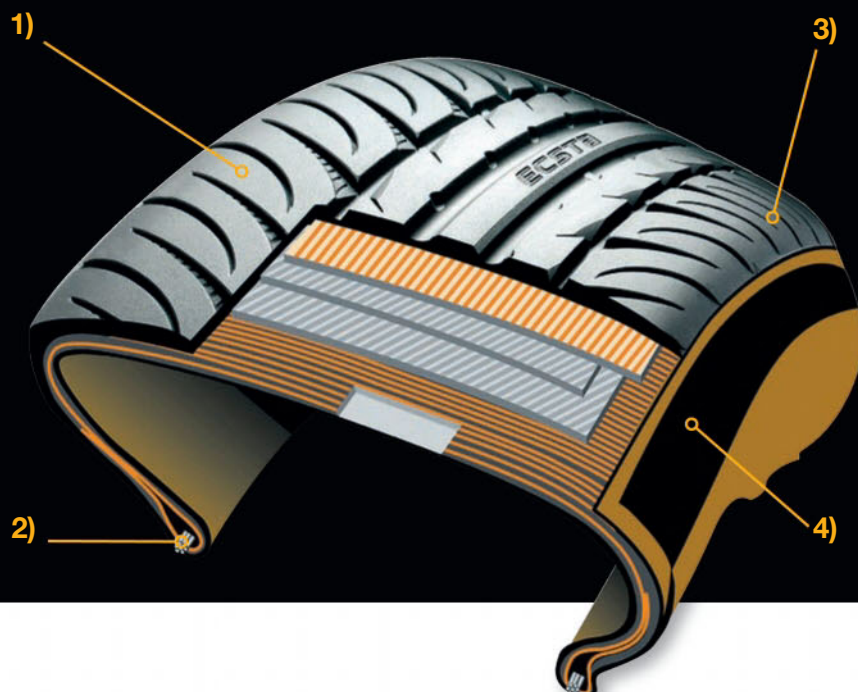
Every tyre brand and each of their models will have a different make up that directly affects the amount of grip they can produce. Generally speaking softer, sticky compounds, like those you'd find in a performance tyre, will give far better grip but will wear out quicker. Conversely, a harder compound (like you'd find in a budget tyre) will last for ages but give little confidence in the corners. For the manufacturers it's a balancing act between the two. There's little point in having a super-grippy road tyre if it's bald after 100 miles, right?

As for what actually makes up any given compound, well, the specifics are often closely

guarded secrets. We know that the tyre industry is the biggest consumer of natural rubber on the planet and, along with carbon black, you have the majority of a basic tyre compound. Usually there's also small amounts of silica for low heat buildup and reinforcement, sulphur for the vulcanisation process, zinc oxide as an activator, antioxidants to prevent sidewall cracking and some even add black chili compound for improved grip and lower rolling resistance. The exact percentages of each material however, are always under lock and key.

## Tyre anatomy

As you'll know, there are lots of parts that make up a tyre, but to prevent this guide turning into some sort of 3,000-page saga, here's the main bits that affect the handling...



## Manufacture

Building a tyre is a process that's just as complicated as the mixture of materials involved. Tyres are built in layers on a drum and then cured in a huge press under immense heat and pressure to bond them all together.

The vulcanisation process is a polymerisation reaction facilitated by all this heat that links the rubber monomers creating huge elastic molecules. These polymers create the elastic quality that permits the tyre to be compressed in the area where it contacts the road surface and then spring back to its original shape.





### 1) Tread

The tread is simply there to dissipate water for better traction in the wet. The general rule is that the more channels there are in the tread, the better it is at getting rid of surface water. Conversely fewer channels means more rubber contact for increased dry grip. This is the exact reason why track tyres with a minimum of grooves are so good in the dry, but a little scary when it starts raining. It's simply down to how much rubber is touching the tarmac, and how much the tread design channels water away from the contact patch. It also explains why pattern-less slicks give a silly amount of grip on a dry track but are illegal on the road here in the UK where the weather is, let's face it, usually pretty miserable. Most standard car tyres are non-directional with a symmetrical tread pattern over the whole width of the tyre. More performance-focused road tyres tend to be directional because certain parts of the tread and shoulder are asymmetrically adapted to give better all-round performance. Usually these will also have a continuous rib running down the middle to help with straight-line stability.

### 2) Bead

The bead is the bit that keeps the tyre on the wheel. This has steel cord inside it that locks it to the rim under the pressure of the air inside. The compound of the rubber covering it has to be properly hardcore to deal with the immense friction over the life of the tyre. Rather than the tread and shoulders, the bead is also where the width measurement is taken.

### 3) Shoulder

When cornering, the shoulder is the part that has to work the hardest and the whole area has to be designed to counteract all the motion forces acting on it. The stiffness of the blocks along the shoulder also affect ability to resist deformation, and these are separated by water dispersing grooves called sipes.

With directional performance tyres, very often the outside edge will be given large stiff blocks to help with handling, while the inside edge will contain smaller blocks for increased water dispersal. Obviously it's important to get these on the wheel the right way round.

### 4) Sidewall

Sidewall size and design is usually one big trade-off between handling and ride quality. When cornering, they're designed to deform in a way that keeps the maximum amount of tread on the road. It's also the reason that a stiff, low profile sidewall with little flex is good for handling but not necessarily for comfort.

Sidewall sizes are particularly important for us modifiers because these get smaller and stiffer when we're 'plus-sizing' (fitting bigger diameter wheels, with lower profile tyres to keep a close overall diameter).

The lower part of the sidewall is known as the APEX and how much material it contains often denotes how stiff or soft the sidewall will be, with performance rubber this is often beefed up for increased rigidity.



### The numbers

On the sidewall you'll find a load of letters and numbers which are there to provide coded information about that particular tyre. The amount of info varies between different manufacturers and on some you'll find everything from the maximum permissible pressure and the production date, to a US DOT ID number and ECE Approval mark... the kind of stuff you'll probably never need. Some of the code is useful though and here's what it means:

**(P)** – This denotes the type of tyre. In this case P means passenger car. It can also be LT for light truck, ST for special trailer or T for temporary.

**(205)** – Nominal section width – the number is the width of the tyre in mm.

**(55)** – Aspect Ratio – the height of the sidewall expressed as a percentage of the tyre width. In this case it's 55 percent of 205mm.

**(R)** – Construction – in this case, as with most modern tyres, the R stands for radial. Sometimes this is substituted for ZR in high performance tyres. Can also be B for bias belt or D for diagonal.

**(16)** – Diameter (in inches) – here the tyre is for a 16-inch wheel.

**Load index** – identifies the maximum load capacity when driven at maximum speed. With passenger cars these usually range between 70 (462kg) and 110 (1060kg).

**Speed rating** – the maximum speed the tyre can sustain at full load. H is equal to 130mph and commonly they range between Q – 100mph and Y – 186mph.

## Modifying tyre sizes

### Stretched tyres

We all know this is popular, eh? The idea here is to help run a wider wheel while still being able to fit the rubber under your arches. In this case you'd simply run a tyre designed for a thinner wheel, say a 195/45 designed for a 6-inch wide wheel on an 8-inch wide wheel.

It's also a trend that's been around for decades. The Japanese call it 'hapani' and have been doing it since the inception of drifting, because it generates less sidewall flex, albeit at the expense of a much harsher ride. The real question then, is if stretching is sensible or not? It's a question that's often up for debate. Although you can watch drift cars going sideways at silly speeds all day long and not see one pop off. I guess that says it all.

### Tyre pressures

It's worth remembering all the hard work can go to pot if you don't keep your tyre pressures in check. Manufacturers recommend the ideal pressures for your car and it's best to stick to those, for road use at least. Some people run a couple of extra PSI if tyres are stretched, but as long as you check yours regularly, it's not necessary from a safety point of view. Under-inflated tyres take more force to turn so you'll use more fuel and over-inflated-tyres can decrease the contact patch with a detrimental effect on handling. Both will make your rubber wear out quicker and increase the risk of a blow out, so make sure you keep an eye on it!

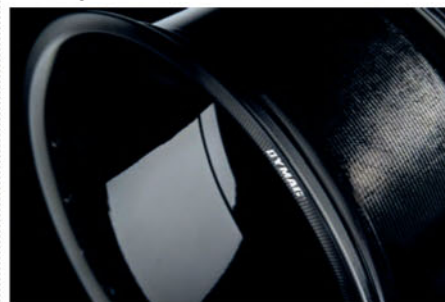


### Oversized tyres

The opposite to stretching, running oversized rubber, is one trend that's totally performance orientated. It's all about getting more contact with the tarmac and done by simply running tyres designed for fatter rims, often with a slightly higher profile. Instead of a stretched-in or a straight sidewall, oversized tyres tend to bulge out and are particularly popular in motorsport, where the need for traction outweighs the need for less sidewall flex.

#### Top contact:

Nankang, [www.nankangtyre.co.uk](http://www.nankangtyre.co.uk)



## Wheels

Standard alloy wheels, even on high performance cars, are often made with looks in mind rather than performance, and can weigh a hell of a lot; lightweight wheels are a significant improvement. A typical set of standard 18-inch alloys can weigh up to 12kg each, while lightweight aftermarket ones can be as light as 7kg, giving a saving of 20kg in total. But, and this is a big but, wheels are not only unsprung weight (see box below), but are also rotating, which massively magnifies the effect of the weight, some say as much as 10 times over normal weight loss! The real world effect of simply fitting lightweight wheels is very noticeable in all performance aspects.

Fitting lighter wheels will benefit road handling, but there are substantially lighter options than alloys, that offer even greater performance benefits. The patented Dymag BOXSTROM carbon composite wheel for example, is up to 40 percent lighter than standard alloy wheels and that's without compromising safety.

The BOXSTROM carbon composite barrel is typically teamed with a bespoke high-specification, forged aluminium centrepiece. The result is a carbon composite hybrid auto wheel that melds the benefits of cutting-edge carbon composite performance with the flexibility of styling and stiffness offered by forged aluminium.

This is even more important as wheels continually get bigger: the low weight of the carbon barrel also significantly reduces the MOI (moment of inertia), reducing the energy to accelerate and brake the large rotating wheel while maintaining high lateral stiffness of total hybrid wheel system.

#### Top contact:

Dymag, [www.dymag.com](http://www.dymag.com)

### Unsprung weight

Unsprung weight is anything not supported by the shocks and springs, so basically the wheels, tyres, brakes, hubs, and suspension arms. Simple huh? The significance of unsprung weight is that it affects the handling far more than sprung weight. So anything you can do to reduce it can have a huge effect on a track car, especially.



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JEROEN PEERLINCK'S S2000

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T O N E ' S   S 3

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# It's Not Easy Being **Green**

*So sang Kermit the Frog in 1970. But just look at this  
Honda. It's so green! So very, very green...*





"AirREX struts and AccuAir e-Level mean it'll happily psssh-psssh at will"



It's pretty well established that limes are a strong source of vitamin C. That's why drinking gin-and-tonics is good for you. But what happens when you overdose on vitamin C? Well, something like this chlorophyll-fest S2000 arrives to taunt your psyche.

Avoiding clichés, you see, is like not shooting fish in a barrel. There are a lot of car mags out there, and we pride ourselves in setting Fast Car apart from the white noise on the shelves by being a little more discerning, thoughtful, considered. Not just bringing you the finest modified motors the world has to offer, but also telling you interesting things about them. Piquing your intrigue. Laying out the facts like a delicious picnic, ready for you to graze with casual abandon. A morsel of horsepower here, a nugget of carbon fibre there. Perhaps a soupçon of Alcantara.

But when you're faced with a car such as this one, it's hard not to acknowledge the obvious, and there's only one thought that immediately springs to mind: GREEN. Damn, that's green. It's the greenest thing since Kermit and the Hulk felt up a couple of Ninja Turtles in Postman Pat's home town, thus turning the townspeople a certain envious colour.

So yes, we've got the glaringly in-your-face thing out of the way first. This S2000 really is very, very green, and it would be most short-sighted not to mention that. It's actually a stock-palette Honda colour – named simply Lime Green – rather than some kind of unique House of Kolor candy creation. But the fact it's complemented by a pondlife-fabulous cavalcade of Takata-green flocking inside the car just amps the thing up and into the uber-green stratosphere.

This project is the brainchild of Jeroen Peerlinck, a 29-year-old roofer from Belgium, who presumably likes to divide his time

between drinking mint juleps, campaigning for the Green Party and steaming broccoli, and you can't deny the transformative effects of what his obsession with the snotty hue has achieved. Naturally, of course, this is more than simply a fancy green paint job. So let's peel off a wrinkle of that alien skin and peer underneath.

"It all started for me back when I was 16," Jeroen explains. "That's when I first got into the modified car scene. I've always had modded cars. My first was a Yaris VVT-I back in 2007, then there was a limited-edition Honda Civic Type R in Championship White, which I still have, as well as a Mk1 Golf."

So why an S2000? Bit different to all the hatchbacks he'd had before, no? "The idea had been through my mind for several years," he shrugs. "The opportunity came up, so I took it! It's a JDM-spec car, so it's a little more powerful as standard, and I could see the potential right away: the American scene inspired me for this project, and I wanted to get the car out quickly and show that everything is possible in a relatively short space of time. It's hard to say exactly how long I spent building it, as it was all late nights and weekends, but I started in November last year and was finished by April."

What Jeroen has done, in spite of the outrageous colour scheme, is to focus on the importance of minimalism. While this may at first glance appear to be a comprehensively modified car, he's zeroed in on a short list of mods and carried them out properly and with care, rather than simply throwing a whole fashion-forward catalogue of parts into the mix. The bodywork, for example, is largely stock. But it's been extensively smoothed before being re-shot in the juicy Honda shade; the window frames wear a piano black lacquer to form a barrier between the inner and outer greens. "Everything was done with a lot of help from friends, with special thanks to Kim





*Staggered WORK rims bolted to the hubs using StanceNation extended lug nuts*



*Did we mention the colour?*





"I love that there's no other S2000 quite like it. It's all my own vision"



Larcher," he says. "There were some setbacks here and there during construction, but with the courage to continue with just one goal in mind, we got it done. The hardest part was the engine bay."

Yes, it does look like a lot of effort, doesn't it? You'll spot that, along with the engine itself being flawlessly clean, the bay has been fully smoothed and painted in a shiny contrasting colour. The motor itself hasn't actually been modified aside from the addition of one or two bolt-ons, but if you know the F20C, you'll know it's a bonkers screamer of a race car unit with forged pistons and a 9,200rpm redline, so Honda have basically pre-modified it for you. Jeroen's task here was to create a sumptuous bed for this jewel-like engine

to lie in, something he's pulled off with alacrity. "I have to thank the members of LowStatement," he says. "The full wire tuck, disassembling and cleaning the engine, the polished inlet by Jan Vergote, it was all a lot of work!"

And with an eye-catching exterior, you need the interior to be equally shouty, don't you? So what Jeroen's pulled off here is quite clever: yes, he's taken the well-trodden path of fitting Bride Low Max seats and Takata harnesses, but he's given the thing a bit of a lime twist.

Chris Van Calster of Takashi Customs has entirely flocked the whole shooting match in the same shade of green as the harnesses, with a massive Takata logo on the dash, while Jeroen got busy dismantling everything and liberally retrimming it all in Bride fabric – the doorcards, the dash, the centre console, the works. It's almost as if he's taking the notion that a lot of cars rock the Bride/Takata combo these days, and ironically firing it right back at everyone.

We have to mention the way the thing sits as well, as that's frankly a masterstroke. The combination of AirREX struts and AccuAir e-Level means that the thing will happily psssh-psssh at will while still riding like a dream, and Jeroen's put a lot of thought into his wheel widths and offsets. Those staggered WORK rims sit perfectly in the unmodded arches, lending the car a killer stance. Simple (well simple-ish) but effective, right?

"I love that there's no other S2000 quite like it," he enthuses. "It's all my own vision, and I try to take the car to as many meets as possible – mostly in Belgium but also across the border in France, The Netherlands..."

"I've achieved what I wanted to achieve with it so far, although there are plans still forming, new things I want to try – the future will tell!"

It surely will. Hey, it's not easy being green, although it does appear to be good for you. **FL**



**Bride Low Max seats and Takata harnesses**





## TECH SPEC: **HONDA S2000**

### STYLING

Honda Lime Green paint; fully smoothed; rear lip spoiler; smoothed and wire-tucked engine bay in gloss white.

### TUNING

2.0-litre F20C VTEC (JDM 247bhp spec) – fully detailed; SRS straight-through exhaust system.

### CHASSIS

8.5x19in ET37 (front) and 9.5x19in ET35 (rear) 3-piece WORK Meister S1 wheels; 215/35 (front) and 225/35 (rear) Falken Azenis tyres; StanceNation extended lug nuts; AirREX air-ride system with AccuAir e-Level management.

### INTERIOR

Fully flocked in green; Bride Low Max seats; Takata harnesses; themed Bride and Takata accents throughout; bubble flower gearknob; custom carpets; Broadway mirror; Kode steering wheel; Hertz component speakers.



*Now, that's what you call a smoothed bay*



# 10

TOP

## WOLVES IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

The cult of the sleeper is well established: cars that appear unassuming but harbour secret depths of hidden firepower. You know the kind of thing: the Volvo 850 T5 Estate, Mitsubishi Galant VR-4, VW Passat W8, Lancia Thema 8.32 (y'know, that humdrum saloon with the Ferrari V8 shoved into it). But that's not quite what we're talking about here. No, we're looking at the cars that are generally sidelined for being a bit ordinary, not terribly exciting, but have hidden potential to be tuned up to improbable and spooky levels. Not factory sleepers. DIY sleepers!

You see, engines exist in families. You may find a detuned version in a lowly model, which can be very easily either modified to be as powerful as the top-of-the-line sport variant, or just simply swapped without drama. And sometimes the manufacturer simply shoved the full-fat, high-spec version in a dull car and nobody noticed. Whichever way, there's hidden horsepower out there in places you wouldn't expect. Here are some surprising options to get you from zero to hero without anyone realising...



### SEAT EXEO

The Exeo is a weird car. It's not bad as such, it's just kind of... pointless. It's as if the big cheeses at the company had a meeting one day and someone said "Hang on a minute – we don't have a new car in the saloon-versions-of-hatchbacks niche right now. Can we just throw one together out of various bits from the parts bin?" So it's not really a unique design, more a Frankenstein's monster – in fact there's quite a lot of Audi A4 in there. But the juicy detail is that the Exeo was available with the Volkswagen group's iconic 1.8 20vT motor – the very same one you find in 210bhp form in the Audi S3, or 225bhp in the TT. OK, the Exeo's 20vT only offered 148bhp, but it's the same basic engine.

How do you get to full-fat 225 spec? Well, the block is the same, but the 225 has different pistons, crank, MAF, injectors, cats, mapping, intercoolers, plus a bigger turbo. So you could just find a BAM-code TT engine and swap it straight in (probably easier), although even a simple remap of the Exeo's motor would get it past 180bhp without trouble. And since there's so much Audi in this oddball SEAT, how hard could it be to build yourself an Exeo Quattro?

**TOP THREE MODS:** Remap, K04 turbo, uprated fuelling



## NISSAN ALMERA

There are iconic hot hatches, there are niche hot hatches, and then there's the Nissan Almera GTI. It's one of those cars that, despite being reasonably good, only five people actually care about them. Those five people are massive fans, will bend your ear for hours about how "It's a good car, really, trust me" and have spent a lot of money building stellar versions for themselves. But it's never a car that's going to worm its way into those ubiquitous Best Hot Hatch of All Time lists.

This, of course, is where you can be a bit sneaky. You see, the Almera GTI has an SR20 motor. And where else do you find the SR20? Yep, the 180SX, the 200SX, the Sunny GTI-R – in SR20DET form, this is a hard-boosting nutter that just loves to be tuned up to insane levels.

The 'T' in the name is significant. It stands for turbo. The Almera GTI's engine is an SR20DE – without the T – so we're talking 140bhp from the factory. Not that thrilling. But the key point is what it represents. The SR20 architecture is native to the Almera, so you can find yourself a hot turbocharged motor and literally just bolt it in. Don't faff with the complexity of trying to boost your engine. Just find a proper DET. Insane horsepower is well within reach. (You might want to upgrade your brakes though, and maybe throw an LSD into the mix!)

**TOP THREE MODS:** SR20DET engine, LSD, all the boost



## FORD TRANSIT

All right, you're just going to have to go with us on this one. As multi-talented as the backbone-of-Britain Transit van may be, it's never really been regarded for the potency and tunability of its engine, has it? Sure, there have been a few entertaining exceptions to this rule. The various Supervans Ford built for PR purposes and Jaguar's XJ220 test mule being notable examples. But the bone-stock builder-spec Trannie? Well, yes actually. There is potential there.

You see, if you buy a petrol-engined Transit from the 1980s or early '90s, you'll spot the number 205 cast into the engine block. You know which other Pinto has a 205 block? You've got it, it's the Cosworth YB, like you'd find in Escort and Sierra RS Cosworths. So if you're a plumber or a roofer who wants to break into the lucrative market of making 24-hour emergency callouts, 600bhp is just a weekend with the spanners away. Er, possibly. It'd make an awesome sleeper too, wouldn't it? Leave a ladder lashed to the roof and a yellowing copy of The Sun on the dash for extra stealth points.

**TOP THREE MODS:** Twin-cam 16v head, huge turbo, dash full of Greggs wrappers



## SAAB 9-2X

When is a Saab not a Saab? When it's a 9-2X. Yeah, that's a pretty crap Christmas cracker joke. But also a fact that may have passed some people by. Naturally there's a lot of enthusiasm for the tunability of Saab turbo motors, as they're as strong as the proverbial ox and love having sodding great wedges of boost shoved into them. But the 9-2X is an entirely different kettle of fish.

The crux of the matter is that it isn't actually a Saab at all. It's a Subaru Impreza with an inexplicable Saab grille glued to the nose.

You could get them in two spec levels, Linear or Aero. In Linear form, the 9-2X had a nat-asp Subaru 2.5-litre flat-four, while the Aero came bristling with the turbo'd 227bhp WRX motor. Which, as you know, just loves to have its belly tickled by men with oily spanners who can throw 400bhp through it in the twinkling of an eye, while everyone who sees you wubba-wubba-wubbaing past will assume you've bought yourself a sensible old man's estate car and there's something wrong with the engine.

OK, the 9-2X was an American-market car that only sold for a couple of years, but it's such a weird quirk of Saab's history that we couldn't leave it out!

**TOP THREE MODS:** STI heads, FMIC, standalone management





## FC GUIDE: WOLVES IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

### AUDI A6 2.7T

The C5-generation Audi A6, built from 1997-2004, is known for two completely separate things: being a sensible and frugal family car, and being a turbo-nutter mega-Quattro. The former is more often the case, with diesel-powered estate cars serving sterling duty in load-lugging, hauling old paving slabs to the tip, and carting the nippers across Europe on holiday road-trips. The latter? Well, the halo is the bonkers RS6, which had a 4.2-litre biturbo V8 with 444bhp. The slightly less mad S6 was still completely loopy. Elitists may sideline it as a soft option, but it still had a bruising V8 and 335bhp. Hero cars, both.

However, there's something else in the C5 line you should know about: the 2.7T. With this car, you need to forget it's an A6 and instead see it as a stealthy S4 – by taking the 2.7-litre biturbo V6 (complete with 247bhp) from the smaller-brother S4, and crowbarring it into an A6 that looks like it's on school-run duty, Audi played a surprising blinder.

The performance potential speaks for itself here. These engines are insane – whack on a couple of K04 turbos, a bigger intercooler and a decent exhaust, map it robustly, and you're staring down the barrel of an S4-baiting 400bhp+. And coupled with the fact that most of the S6/RS6 bits will bolt on easily (the huge brakes, for example), the humble-looking 2.7T could be a real giant-killer.

**TOP THREE MODS:** K04 turbos, remap, RS6 brakes



### SEAT IBIZA TDI SPORT

The Skoda Fabia vRS is a bit of an underground classic: when it was launched in 2003, there was quite a lot of scoffing at the fact they'd created something that was supposed to be a hot hatch, but was only available with a diesel engine. Diesel + Skoda = flat-caps, not B-road thrills.

But then it turned out the vRS was in fact hilarious fun. The headline 130bhp power figure was irrelevant, because the power delivery was all about that 228lb.ft of torque available from just 1500rpm. This thing could hustle!

But when the decision-makers at VAG decided to shove the Fabia vRS mechanicals into a SEAT Ibiza to create the TDI Sport, no-one really noticed. Here was a car that basically looked like every other cheapo Ibiza. It didn't have a Cupra badge – who cares about that?

Well, you should. Because you can pick these things up for peanuts now, and that PD engine has appeared in all sorts of stump-pulling terrors across the VAG-o-sphere. Fancy 158bhp and 243lb.ft? Just rob a few minor bits off a Mk3 Ibiza. Or 150bhp can be found in PD engines in anything from the Mk4 Golf to the Ford Galaxy (which, of course, was actually a SEAT Alhambra). And with a hybrid turbo, FMIC and some bigger injectors you could be chuckling through the dark veil of 230bhp, whilst leaving comically big black clouds everywhere – the stock internals are good for 450lb.ft too, you don't even need to crack it open. No-one will suspect a thing until you boot it.

**TOP THREE MODS:** Hybrid turbo, FMIC, uprated fuelling

### FIAT COUPE 16V TURBO

Here's a car that really reinforces the fact we're not talking strictly about sleepers here. Just look at the thing. Gorgeous, isn't it? A superbly weird bit of design with perfect proportions, it's aged very well indeed. Certainly pretty enough for you to forget they have tendency to break all the time in surprising ways. (Trust us, we've owned a few – they make great ornaments.) You could never call it a sleeper, as it's so obviously a sports car. But there's still a vital wolf-in-sheep's-clothing element here, even if the sheep in question is wearing Air Max and limbering up to Eurodisco.

The thing about the coupe, as with a lot of cars, is that it's subject to a fair bit of snobbery. Anyone with a handful of knowledge will tell you the 20v Turbo is the version to go for, the five-cylinder engine being entertainingly warbly and throwing out 220bhp.

The lesser 16v Turbo, meanwhile, resides in the shadows, unloved and unappreciated. Which is a shame, as its 190bhp four-cylinder motor is actually the same as the one you'd find in the Lancia Delta Integrale. Seriously. That little 16v badge on the B-pillar isn't a mark of shame because you bought the slower car, it's your one-way ticket to Group A rally thrills. It's already packing the P8 management you'd find on an Integrale (or, interestingly, an Escort RS Cosworth), and this can be artfully recalibrated and set to work with some uprated fuelling and a bigger turbo, and suddenly you've got over 400bhp. Strap on the anti-lag and terrify some pedestrians.

**TOP THREE MODS:** Huge turbo, remap, anti-lag





## PROTON SATRIA

The Satria GTI was a car everyone got excited about, and then promptly forgot. There's only about 120 of them left on the road in the UK. But back in 1998 this was very much where it was at. For about 20 minutes, anyway.

Why all the excitement? Well, because Protons are a bit rubbish, aren't they? And yet suddenly they'd released a car with a GTI badge – and it wasn't a cynical marketing exercise either, they'd got Lotus to set up the handling (a fact they wouldn't shut up about, gluing Lotus badges all over the bloody thing) and it had an oh-so late-'90s bodykit, all screwed-on arches and drive-thru-cruise aggression.

So, can a top-of-the-range hot hatch ever really be a wolf in sheep's clothing? In this case, actually, yes. Because the engine – a 1.8-litre four-pot offering 138bhp – was, somewhat surprisingly, a Mitsubishi Lancer GSR engine that'd had its turbo lopped off. So all you have to do is reinstate the turbo (OK, and fiddle around with some other stuff) and you've got a pint-sized Evo. Or rather than bugging about, just find an actual Evo engine and a FWD Mitsubishi gearbox, and marvel at how it all just bolts in. Madness and mischief guaranteed.

**TOP THREE MODS:** Evo engine, Colt transmission, maybe remove the Proton badges



## LEXUS IS200

There's a certain reputation that comes with owning a Lexus. Sure, in recent years they've amped up their performance creds to the bedroom-wall-poster market, with the LFA being an insane spectacle of high-revving supercar lunacy. The new LC coupe is pretty awesome from most angles too, although it does have that face. You know the one. All modern Lexuses have it. It looks like frickin' Predator. Hideous. But all that aside, the reputation is a bit Alan Partridge. The Japanese Mercedes. That was his term.

This helps very much for the IS200 buyer today. It may have been the model that inadvertently kicked off the unfortunate 1990s trend for Lexus lights (and we truly hope they're sorry), but for the most part this was a car for sensible middle-managers, people who felt a 3 Series was a bit common.

They're cheap as chips today, and blend seamlessly into the monochrome of modern traffic. Which is great, because the 3.0-litre model has a 2JZ motor. What's that? Oh, only the straight-six you'd find in a Supra!

It hasn't got the twin-turbos here, of course, but it wouldn't take NASA to get a Supra-spec motor in there – and you know how strong and tunable the 2JZ is, right? Don't bother tuning the nat-asp 2JZ-GE, just bolt in a turbo'd 2JZ-GTE as a straight-swap and whimsically daydream about how they can be reliably tuned beyond 1,000bhp. Imagine that in a slightly battered, '90s commuter-spec silver IS200.

**TOP THREE MODS:** Supra engine, single-turbo conversion, custom exhaust



## NISSAN MURANO

It's an unfortunate fact of modern life that SUVs are the motoring industry's main growth sector. Jaguar have caved, so have Maserati, Bentley and even Rolls-Royce. These are all high-performance models, of course – the humdrum everyday sight is more likely to be uninspiring plodders with Ford or Vauxhall badges. SUVs that are utilitarian, logical and tacitly imply you've given up on the idea of having a fun car.

Nissan's Murano, however, has a secret. While it may look to be the casual bystander to be a slightly funky but now also slightly aged soft-roader, with a bit of wacky design and the drudgery of SUV life baked in, it's actually hiding the engine from a 350Z.

That's right. The first-gen Murano, built from 2002-07, has a VQ35DE motor – a 3.5-litre V6. In the Murano it has 245bhp, but the 350Z had up to 300bhp, so you're only a remap away from glory. That'll blow away a few cobwebs on the school run.

**TOP THREE MODS:** GReddy turbo conversion, custom exhaust, standalone management





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**CLASSIC FORD SHOW**  
**SUNDAY 3RD JUNE**  
SANTA POD | [Classicfordshow.co.uk](http://Classicfordshow.co.uk)

**PV SHOW**  
**SUNDAY 24TH JUNE**  
SANTA POD | [Pvshow.co.uk](http://Pvshow.co.uk)

**JAPFEST DONINGTON**  
**SATURDAY 30TH JUNE**  
DONINGTON | [Japfest.co.uk](http://Japfest.co.uk)

**TRAX DONINGTON**  
**SUNDAY 1ST JULY**  
DONINGTON | [traxshows.co.uk](http://traxshows.co.uk)

**FORD FAIR**  
**SUNDAY 5TH AUGUST**  
SILVERSTONE | [fordfair.co.uk](http://fordfair.co.uk)

**FORDFEST**  
**SUNDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER**  
SANTA POD | [fordfestshow.co.uk](http://fordfestshow.co.uk)

**TRAX**  
**SUNDAY 7TH OCTOBER**  
SILVERSTONE | [traxshows.co.uk](http://traxshows.co.uk)

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**PVS**

**JAPFEST**  
DONINGTON

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**FordFest**

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## CLASSICS WORLD

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SANDOWN PARK | [volksworldshows.com](http://volksworldshows.com)

**BROMLEY PAGEANT**  
**SUNDAY 17TH JUNE**  
NORMAN PARK | [bromleypageant.co.uk](http://bromleypageant.co.uk)

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# TICKET BOOKING COMING SOON!

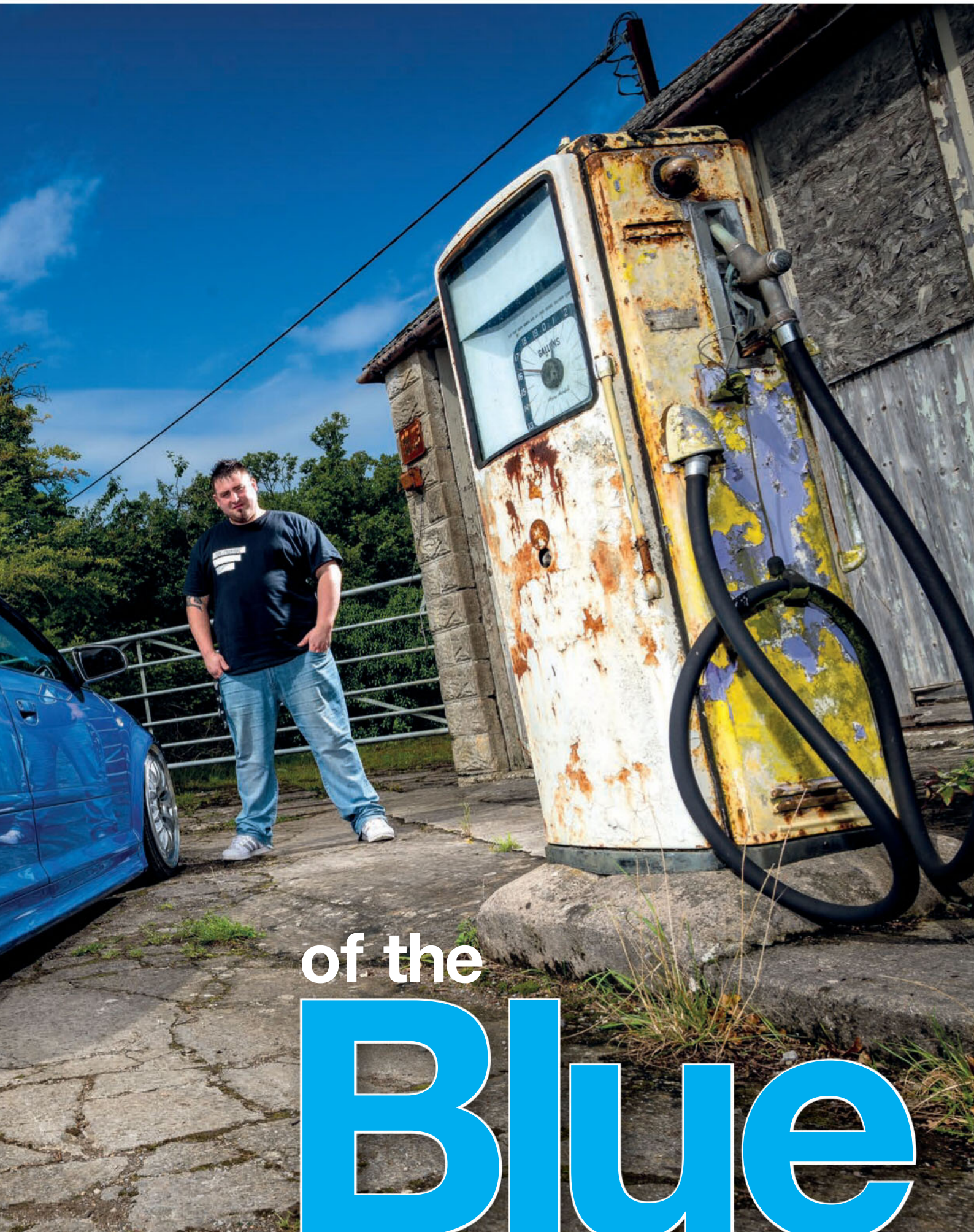


# Out

*You can plan and plan a project until you're blue in the face.  
But sometimes inspiration just pops up out of nowhere...*







of the  
**Blue**





**F**ans of Peep Show will recognise there are two types of people. The Mark types: never entering a room without first mapping out where the exits are, always knowing for sure that they've got clean pants for the morning, never running out of milk. And the Jez types: ambling about in a blissful haze, just seeing where life takes them. Matt Vanstone, the fella behind this spiffy S3, is a Jez.

"I've always loved the modified car scene, but never really knew what I wanted to mess around with," he admits. "I had a few Fords, and when the Euro-look came out I did a Fiesta ST with a Euro theme. But then I started seeing more and more German motors and fell in love with the VAG/Dub scene – so stylish, yet chilled out and everyone was really cool and easy to speak to. So off to the German car scene I went, like a kid going to the sweet shop!"

"At first I was looking at Golfs – and BMWs, actually! – but I never thought about entertaining an Audi," says Matt. "Until more and more people started doing Audis with simple mods – the cars just looked epic. So after much research I thought the model for me had to be the A3. But to be honest, the spec just wasn't good enough."

"So I thought I'd have to go up a notch, and started looking at S3s. I viewed a few, a black one and an orange one which were all OK, until one day I drove past a local car garage and this Spring

Blue S3 was hidden at the back of the forecourt. I popped in to test drive it and the rest is history! I just fell in love with the colour."

And the decision-making process was as simple as that. No drawn-out plans, just chucking whims into the lap of fate. Apparently that kind of behaviour works out rather well. So presumably, with such a rich and diverse modifying history behind him, Matt was able to dive right in with the evolutionary transformation? "Er, no, actually," he says.

"The pot was pretty empty after I bought the car, so I didn't really touch anything for about a year. It was in great condition, and completely standard, which was ideal as I wanted a blank canvas."

"After a year I put it on coilovers, just to get it a bit lower and start to make it my own," Matt explains. "But unfortunately I smashed the car up in some really bad weather, aquaplaning into a farmer's field. My heart sank, but thankfully the bodyshop said the damage was all cosmetic and nowhere near a write-off. So we started the rebuild. It took about a month, with a full front end, sideskirts and rear bumper going on. My modding pot was emptying quick."

Where there's a will, as the old cliché goes, there's a way, and Matt spotted an opportunity while the car was off the road to rework it in rather radical style: the coilovers came off, and a full Air Lift Slam Series system took their place. Some 2011-spec taillights also found their way into the mix (the car is an earlier 2007 model), and Matt acquired a set of Mercedes wheels that he polished up to a mirror shine and ended up running for a couple of years.

The quality of the work was really starting to speak for itself, and a few trophies were won. Some big-name companies started sniffing around. And before Matt knew it, the next chapter was already being written.

"I changed wheels a couple of times, and by this point I really wanted to do something with the interior," he remembers. "I knew I wanted leather, and I found it's a pain in the arse choosing a colour! I didn't really have a shade in mind, I just wanted the smoothest leather available, and in the end that turned out to be Bentley Nappa."

"My trimmer pulled it all together in time for Ultimate Dubs 2016. I chose the Linen colour just from having seen it in photos, and the finish is so soft and plush it's just amazing. I also did some carbon-fibre work at this point, and the new three-inch Cobra Sport exhaust system, and then of course there were some new wheels – safe to say I've had a lot of wheels!"

All seemed peachy in the Vanstone world, when all of a sudden,







*Super smooth  
Bentley Nappa leather*



*A weapon of bass destruction*



**"I popped in to test drive it and the rest is history! I fell in love with the colour"**





*It's fair to say the car's made a full recovery from the accident*

out of the Sprint Blue, the engine blew up! "The valves went everywhere, there were bits of camshaft all over the gaff. It was a right mess." Did Matt give up at this point? Of course not.

The cash he'd been saving for a new set of three-piece rims instead went on a full engine rebuild. He missed the rest of the 2016 show season, which meant his swanky new interior didn't really get a chance to be shown off, so he did the only logical thing: sank a bunch of money into a big-spec audio build.

Yeah, modifying logic isn't like normal logic. You just have to be like Jez and go with the flow. "An old friend of mine who'd set up his own business sorted out the build, and VIBE helped out big time with the equipment too," he says.

So after all these trials and tribulations, is there a clearly defined path for the future of this S3? Or is the whole thing being left in the hands of fate? "Actually, it's up for sale," Matt grins. "I asked the missus to marry me, and she said yes! So the car's got to go to pay for the wedding. But fear not... as soon as that's out of the way I reckon I'll be back with an Audi RS4..."

Well, he says that. But it sounds a bit too much like making a plan, doesn't it? Let's see what fate has to say about it. **FI**

*"I fell in love with the VAG/Dub scene – so stylish, yet chilled out"*

## STYLING

Sprint Blue; 2011-spec taillights; custom gloss black grille using standard item and RS6 item moulded together; carbon-fibre B-pillars and mirrors; Forge chrome petrol cap.

## TUNING

2.0-litre TFSI; Forge Twintake induction kit with carbon-fibre air filter covers; Forge chrome recirculating valve; Forge blue silicone hose kit; Forge chrome charcoal canister cover; Forge chrome oil, water and coolant caps; Forge adjustable quick-shifter; custom-made engine cover using original airbox dipped in carbon-fibre effect and cream colour pipework; 3in Cobra Sport cat-back exhaust system.

## CHASSIS

8.5x19in ET35 Rotiform LSR cast wheels in silver finish with polished dish; Air Lift Slam Series struts with 3/8 lines; 2x Viar compressors; 4-gallon skinned air tank (painted cream to match engine bay); V2 AutoPilot trimmed in leather in custom holder.

## INTERIOR

2011-spec flat-bottom steering wheel with carbon-fibre airbag cover; Audi S5 front seats with custom diamond-stitch centres – retrimmed in Bentley Nappa leather (Linen with blue stitch); carbon-fibre seat control panels; carbon-fibre seat backs and grab handles; also retrimmed in matching leather: rear seats, armrest, handbrake lever, gear gaiter, parcel shelf, glovebox, beneath steering wheel, doorcard inserts.

## AUDIO

Alpine ILX-700 Apple CarPlay doubleDIN; VIBE CVEN component speakers; VIBE CVEN monoblock amp, VIBE CVEN 12in subwoofer; VIBE CVEN 5-channel amp; custom install by VANTage Customs.

## THANKS

Kris Butler at Forge Motorsport; Matt at System Clenz Detailing for keeping it super-clean for me before shows; James Batty at Auto Finesse; Dub Fiction family/crew; VIBE Audio; James at VANTage Customs for the audio build; Mark Fisher at Air Lift; the missus for putting up with my tantrums when things don't go to plan; Fordy for always giving me a hand; Dan at South West Kustom for all the bodywork; Colin Haden at D Haden Upholstery for my killer interior.





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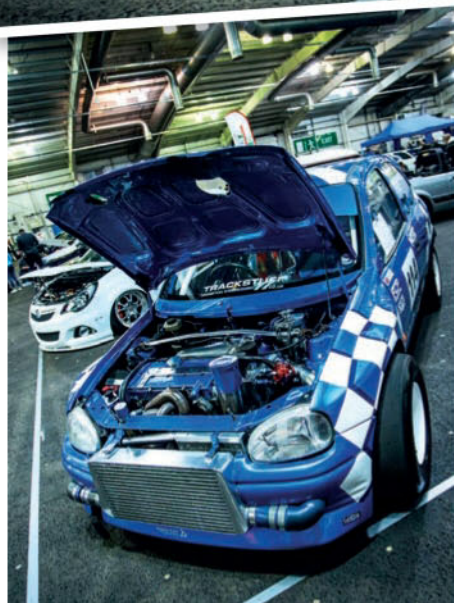


*Yellow but not mellow*

*Ferrari 348 rims!!*



*Midge was chuffed with his new ride*



*We're loving the Jap-inspired wheel choice*



*There's not one thing we'd change on this RX-7. Perfection*





# Scottish Car Show 2017

ONE OF SCOTLAND'S BIGGEST AND BEST CAR SHOWS  
JUST GOT A WHOLE LOT BIGGER

**S**CS is now one of Scotland's biggest, best and long-established shows and for over a decade it has been a one-day event. This time though, the organisers took the plunge and stretched it out over a full weekend.

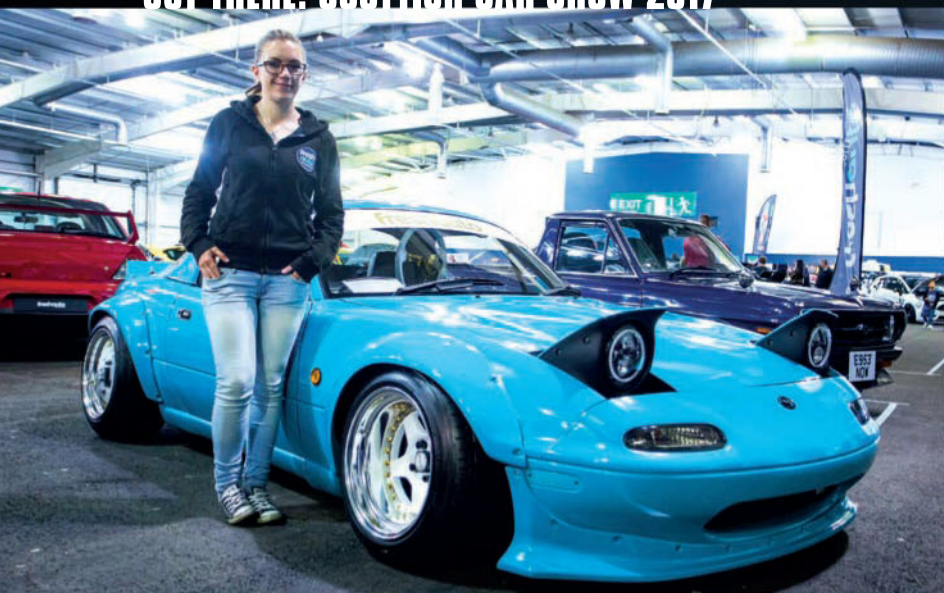
As always with change, there was support as well as criticism, but overall it was still well attended and gave us some fine machinery to drool over.

Other than having an extra day to enjoy the show, the format remained the same as before. The Top 50 and car clubs displayed indoor, while outside was taken over by more club displays and traders. Live entertainment was courtesy of the Vertical Trix Stunt Team, drift taxis and supercar rides.

It all provided plenty to see and do and all done in a great atmosphere. Overall it was enjoyed by most, and here's just some of what we found...



# OUT THERE: SCOTTISH CAR SHOW 2017



*A full feature on Eilidh Dunsire's MX-5 will be in issue 392*



*Ross McAlwee's Golf GTi is a bit tasty*



*Pete McHugh has been busy*







*Barrie Whitehall's GT-R has plenty of show and plenty of go*



## Top 50

This section is dedicated to the best of the best! It may not strictly be true, as some still choose to display with their own clubs, but the standard is always high. For example, Barrie Whitehall's Grey GT-R was outstanding, sitting on air, full of subtle details and packing some mighty engine mods. Chris Colgan had two very different Corsas on show; one almost standard in red and one totally rebuilt to a 4WD rally spec with a Saab turbo engine. Pete McHugh's fully kitted Impreza impressed with its bright blue and orange colour combo. Eilidh Dunsire's Rocket Bunny MK-5 looked ace and Ross McAlwee's Golf in Porsche blue was a hit!



*This nutty thing is rocking a 4WD system and Saab turbo engine*



# OUT THERE: SCOTTISH CAR SHOW 2017



#Winners



"Oggy oggy oggy..."

## Awards

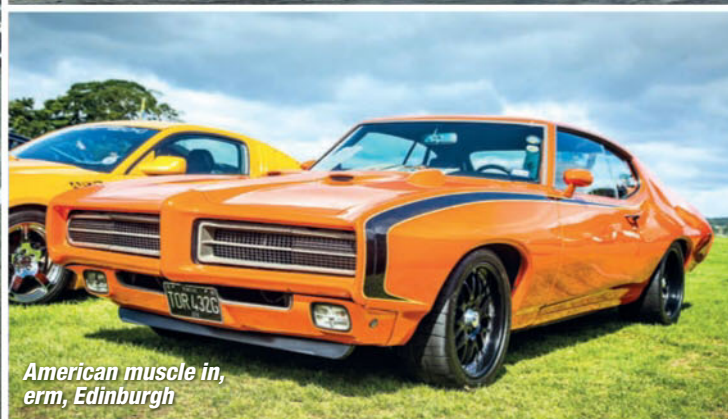
Fuzz from Car SOS was a new visitor to the show and he was given the task of handing out the trophies. Amongst the winners were Monster Unit, who are no strangers to the Best Club Stand award, but StreetKings ran them close with a fine display. Car of the Show is always a controversial one here, but there could be no arguments as Jurgen Vallons of JM Imports won with his modified Lambo Huracan, as you do!



"... Oi oi oi"



"Quick, I've left my bumper at home. Let's get it before someone sees!"



American muscle in, erm, Edinburgh



The Scotts are a patriotic bunch...



## Go in 2018!

Now this is a full weekend show, there's no excuse. It's well worth a visit. Fly to Edinburgh and you are literally next door to the Royal Highland Centre, where all this takes place. Keep up to date on news of the 2018 show here: [www.scottishcarshow.com](http://www.scottishcarshow.com)





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# *The* **Long Game**

*The last thing you want to do with a project car is rush it. You'll end up with something flaky that you're never happy with. Rich Colbeck's flawless Pandem M3 is proof that if you're going to do it, you've got to do it right...*







**B**uilding a project car is much like playing a game of high-stakes poker. You've always got to be mindful not to give away your hand, not to exhibit a giveaway tell, not to let anyone know how powerful your finish will be until the time is right. It also requires a lot of whisky, a dimly lit room, an opponent named Knuckles of questionable moral virtue, and... Actually no, it isn't like poker at all.

It is all very 'Too soon, junior...' though. When you're at the planning stage, it's exciting to visualise the finished product, to rush through it and cut a few corners in order to show everyone your big

idea. But you have to be patient, play the long game, do things properly. Otherwise you'll always be a little bit disappointed. Like those couples on *Grand Designs* who blow a million on a custom-built house, then cock it up at the last minute with a cheapo caravan kitchen because they're desperate to move in.

This gloriously aggressive E46 M3, rocking its boisterous Pandem wide arches, is a clear manifestation of why you shouldn't rush things. It's been built properly, to a very high standard, and the results speak for themselves. But there's more to this story than meets the eye. You see, we knew of this car in its first wide-arch guise, and... well, we don't want to be uncharitable, but let's just



## HOT RIDE: BMW M3



say it wasn't exactly in show car condition. If you rush things, people will know. This car was, in fact, the very first E46 M3 in the UK to be fitted with the still-boxfresh Rocket Bunny Pandem kit. Although the manner in which it was originally put together didn't exactly do the car any favours. It was more of a 50-yard motor. It photographed well. It looked cool as it rolled by. But it didn't really bear close scrutiny.

What's most impressive about the car's resurrection is that its new owner, Rich Colbeck, didn't even mean to take on another project – he was looking for something stock that he could just have a bit of fun with. But the old ugly-duckling scenario reared its head, and Rich just felt compelled to help the BMW recuperate and heal, so it could develop into the swan it was always destined to be.

It helps, of course, that Rich has a lengthy history of building flawlessly executed rides. His last car, for example, a Liquid Yellow Mitsubishi Evo VIII dripping in carbon fibre and boasting an eye-watering spec, was featured within these very pages just a few months ago. This, then, is a man who does things properly – as

you'd no doubt expect given his day job, pulling the strings at Autoworx in Hull.

"I'd always wanted an E46 M3," Rich explains. "I decided that once the Evo was done, I was just going to buy an M3 and take a break from modified cars for a bit. Although as you can see, that went horribly wrong!"

Indeed, but fate's loss is our gain, as the hunk of Hulk-like loveliness here keenly proves. Having spotted the UK's first Pandem E46 on eBay, those mental cogs couldn't help but spin into motion, formulating mischievous ideas and extravagant stratagems.

"I'd bought the car blind on eBay and collected it after midnight so I didn't really look around the car as much as I should have done. At first my intention was to fix all the issues and leave it at that, but then one job ended up leading to another and, well, here we are. The stance wasn't right either, and it was useless to drive, so I really did have to change some things," Rich explains.

He's not kidding. The car's actually largely unrecognisable from its former guise. It's only the fact that it's a Pandem E46 on Squared wheels that gives away its past life, as Rich has pretty much changed everything. The bodywork has been radically overhauled and reworked – the Rocket Bunny curves now fit perfectly, and there's been extensive smoothing before local garage Modern Classics shot the whole thing in a one-off mix of House of Kolor's Shimrin Green. The roof is a contrasting metallic grey, and there are carbon fibre splitters and diffusers to ramp up the aggression.

Those unique wheels have been refinished in a fresh new hue and, to get it all sitting properly, the bodged coilovers have been junked and replaced with a premium Air Lift Performance air-ride system, complete with V2 management.

So, Rich was planning to take a break from modifying, was he? "Yeah, this car was basically stripped right back and started again from scratch, in the end," he laughs. "Since I've owned it this year it's had new paint, air-ride, new seats, wheels refurbed, new exhaust, new splitter, new diffuser, new lights, new steering wheel, new spoiler, full polybushing, rear subframe mounts reinforced..." Fair to say he's been a busy boy, then. And he's far from done with it. Having started thinking about selling the M3 to buy an American



**Premium Air Lift Performance**  
air-ride system and V2 management





*Corbeau fixed buckets and a Personal steering wheel*



*The bodywork has been radically overhauled and reworked*



*Trick touches everywhere***STYLING**

House of Kolor Shimrin green paint; Rocket Bunny Pandem wide-arch bodykit; ducktail spoiler; smoothed front bumper; bonnet and boot badge recesses smoothed; metallic grey roof; carbon-fibre front splitter and rear diffuser; custom mirrors; gloss black kidney grilles; carbon fibre foglight intakes; LED taillights.

**TUNING**

S54B32 3.2-litre straight-six, K&N induction; custom exhaust system with decat; six-speed manual with short-shift.

**CHASSIS**

9x19in ET21 (front) and 11x19in ET20 (rear) Squared SD2 forged three-piece wheels; 235/35 (f) and 275/30 (r) tyres; Air Lift Performance suspension; V2 management; K-Sport big brake kit (8-pot front, 6-pot rear).

**INTERIOR**

Corbeau fixed bucket seats; Personal steering wheel.

pick-up, the damn thing's wormed its way under Rich's skin, and now he's talking with some enthusiasm about turbo and supercharger options, rollcage specs, setting the chassis up for track and drift use.

"It draws a lot of attention everywhere I go," he says, "and people are always taking photos and asking me questions about it." And a lot of this enthusiasm is down to the quality of the build – sure, you can draw in the magpies with a bunch of shiny trinkets, but it's a job well done that makes people stick around and get excited. Rich may have worked quickly to re-engineer the car and make it flawless, but he didn't rush it, and that's the key difference. As teachers and grandads the world over have been saying for generations, if a job's worth doing, it's worth doing well. **FC**

*Two smokin' barrels*

"I was going to take a break from modifying. That went very wrong!"







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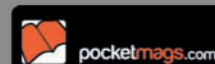


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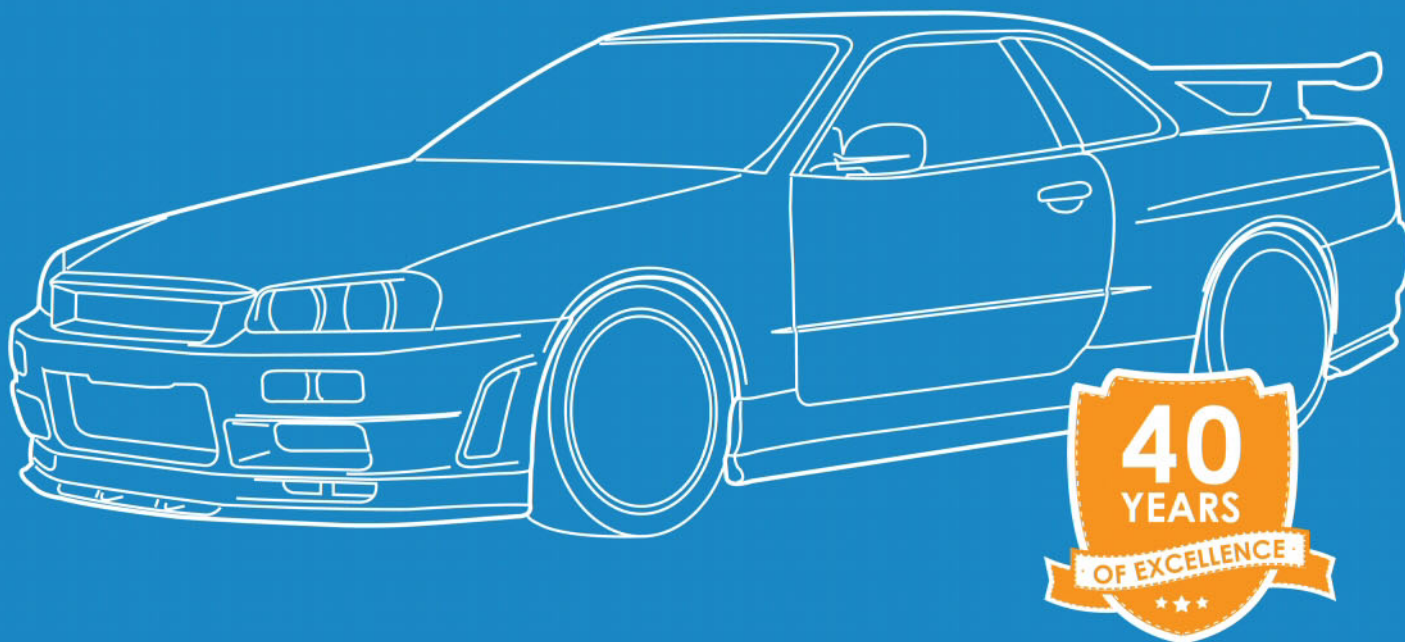
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## FASTPROJECTS



### MIDGE'S BEETLE 1.8T

Midge has been busy with a spot of plumbing this month. Luckily no toilets were involved.

Start

Never Finished

MAIN MODS: K&N INDUCTION KIT • CORBEAU RECLINERS • SMOOTHED FRONT BUMPER • AIR LIFT



P096



### DAN'S AUDI TT 225

Dan just can't stop himself, he trusts EBC for that.

Start

Never Finished

MAIN MODS: EBC BRAKES • FAKE SPLITS (TO BE CHANGED) • LOADS OF PLANS...



P098



### SLIM JULES' BMW 335i

Will this be the BMW's last appearance in FC? No, because it's having a full feature next month.

Start

Finished

MAIN MODS: ADVAN TYRES • AIR LIFT AIR RIDE • 3SDMS • HYBRID TURBOS • MILLTEK EXHAUST • FORGE FMIC



P100





## MIDGE'S BEETLE TURBO

**PLUMBER, ELECTRICIAN, MECHANIC AND AUDIO FITTER.  
JACK OF ALL TRADES, MASTER OF FECK ALL!**



Last month (or a just couple of days ago for me) I made a start on sorting the interior of the Bug. Of course, most of this sorting consisted of ripping just about everything possible out of the car, splashing out on a whole load of top-flight Kicker audio gear and an Air Lift Performance 3P kit, and then pulling my hair out (What hair? – Jules) wondering how the hell I'm gonna fit it all in the tiny boot, let alone pay for it.

Still, that's what credit cards are for and, after a bit of jiggling, all the hardware actually went in nicely. Just about. So, with that logistical part worked out, I could get on with fitting the speakers, mounting the other audio gear and plumbing it all in.

The plan has always been to run the substantial amount of air-ride and audio wiring through the car first, and then get the interior back in before I crack on with all the mechanical stuff like installing the

suspension struts. For once at least, I want it all done properly, so I run fresh speaker cables directly to the amp, and I've decided to run the airlines through the interior rather than underneath the car too. Luckily all this is a damn sight easier with the seats and all the trim already on the workshop floor.

I also paved the way by getting on to Celsus and ordering all the other bits and pieces I needed to hook up the audio gear. Stuff like speaker adaptors, acoustic carpet and a top-notch amp wiring kit. The first job though, was to pull everything out of the boot and give the base board a trim, so it wouldn't have to come out again before everything could be securely mounted.

When it came to fitting the speakers Celsus made their part easy, which is more than can be said about VW. Running the speaker wires through the door shuts and into the car on a new Beetle requires a

little patience and, even though I've always been known for my even temperament and laid-back approach to life (Er, when was this then? – Initial G), it was still a tad on the frustrating side. At least, the rear speakers we're easy to get to and, thanks to Celsus, I wouldn't have to start cutting out MDF adaptors to make them fit.

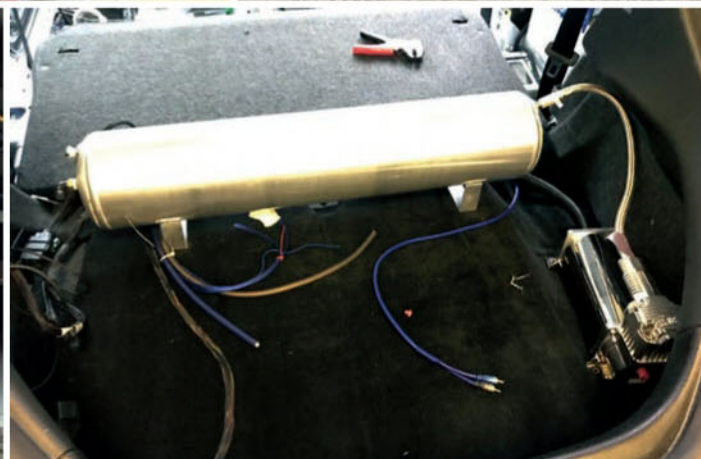
One other big part of installing the speakers was using some of the Dynamat sound deadening I had left over from the TT. I've said it before, and I'll say it again, there's almost no point in bothering to fit powerful new speakers without utilising this stuff.

It always makes a huge difference. Not just because it helps the sound waves bounce back, but it also reinforces the mountings, keeping your speakers solid. To sum up, when it comes to audio gear, quality installation is just as important as having quality hardware.



Let's cut  
some rug

Midge got well wired

Erm, where does  
this go again?Anyone for  
spaghetti?

Anyway, with the speakers installed, running the Air Lift loom and amp cables took up the rest of my day. I ran these down the passenger side (with the RCA lead on the right) and the only real problem was getting both power leads through the bulkhead to the battery.

As I soon found out, the Beetle might be a Golf GTi underneath that retro-inspired body, but because they've made the whole car smaller, there's not what you'd call a lot of room under the dash, wings or anywhere

else. I always find in these sort of situations, that if you shout, swear and properly throw your toys out of your pram, things eventually work out. And that's pretty much what happened. With that job out of the way, hooking up the Kicker amp and Air Lift manifold at the other end was an absolute doddle. That just leaves me the airlines to run and I can get the interior back in.

Mind you, I can't very well refit that shitty grey trim as it is can I? I'd better get hold of some paint before next month.

## THIS MONTH

### PARTS

Celsus 4AG amp wiring kit .....	£29.99
Celsus speaker adaptors X2 .....	£27.99
Celsus acoustic carpet .....	£22.99
Dynamat superlight .....	£already had it.

Total .....

£80.97

### Contacts

Dynamat – [www.dynamateurope.com](http://www.dynamateurope.com)  
Celsus – [www.celsusice.co.uk](http://www.celsusice.co.uk)





As easy as EBC

## DAN'S TT 225 QUATTRO

**A MUCH-NEEDED UPGRADE TO SOME MUCH BETTER BRAKES. PLUS A BUNCH OF OTHER STUFF'S BEEN HAPPENING TOO...**



I left last month's update on a bit of a cliffhanger: I'd just got this TT and was pondering what to fix first. The knackered rear tyres, the weeping shocks, or the terrible brakes?

The obvious answer was, all of the above. Tyres, suspension and brakes are all quite important parts of a car, aren't they? So I had to just bite the bullet, whack out the credit card and try not to look at any of the numbers rushing past.

I dropped it to the cherry-cheeked boys and girls at my local garage, Autotest, with a wishlist of things and some vague instructions to "Make it all work, please". So the rear shocks have been replaced with shiny new ones. I went for OEM items, on the grounds I may well upgrade the whole suspension setup at some point, so there's no point throwing oodles of money at it right now. It sits pretty nicely on its -40mm springs and the handling is spot-on, so fresh new OEM shocks are just the ticket for now.

A new pair of tyres were acquired to replace the knackered rears, and then

swapped to the front – it makes sense to have the new ones at the nose end as they'll be doing most of the work. I went for the Uniroyal RainSport 3 because they get excellent reviews and, hey, it's been raining a lot recently.

The brakes were the most important thing to fix. The stock TT anchors are absolutely appalling, and this wasn't helped by the fact Autotest found a fluid leak hidden away in a hard-to-spot place. After the magnificence of the EBC brakes on my old EP3, the TT's stopping power was seriously underwhelming. So, naturally, I got on the blower to EBC to sort it out!

The TT now wears Blade Sport grooved EBC discs and Yellowstuff pads, which have made a massive difference. I'd heartily recommend this setup to anyone with a fast road car who likes to pummel country lanes. They inspire so much confidence.

I've held off on fitting the braided lines for now, purely as I was curious to compare the difference the discs and pads would make before going the whole hog. The lines can

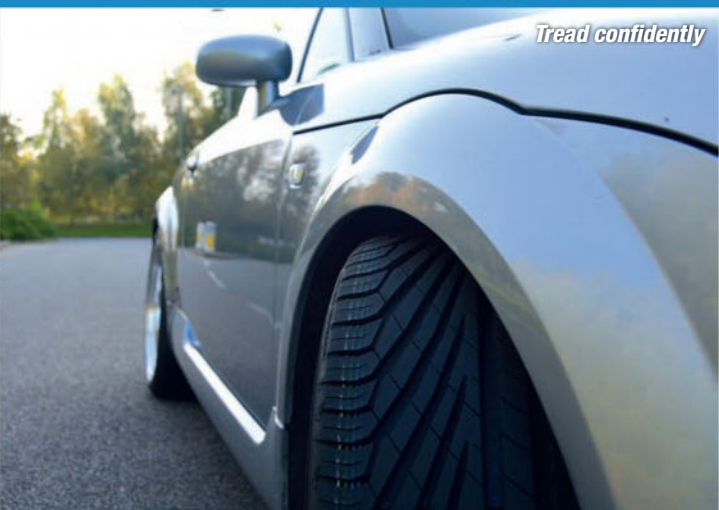
go on next month and, given that the pedal's still slightly squishy, they'll make a world of difference. Overall verdict: buy EBC brakes, basically. It's madness not to.

While the car was at the garage I also got them to fit a new battery – essential for winter – as well as fixing a niggly fault with the driver window not parking itself correctly. You'll spot that the H8 YAY plate is on it now too – a true spiritual successor to the old Civic!

Another essential investment this month was to buy a cheap OBD-II code reader from eBay (£12 posted!) as, being a VAG car, the Audi likes to illuminate its bloody engine warning light all the bloody time. Every VAG car I've owned has done this, and having a code reader saves a lot of money in garage bills...

The fault it keeps throwing up is from the post-cat lambda sensor, which leads me to one logical conclusion: I should probably upgrade the whole exhaust from the cat back, right? Seems sensible to me. Watch this space...





*Tread confidently*



*The new iPhone certainly looks a bit different*



*Let's get it on*



*Fresh rubber*

## THIS MONTH

### PARTS

EBC discs, pads and lines.....	£555.63
2x Uniroyal Rainsport 3 (235/35 R19) .....	£188.78
Rear shocks, battery, various other jobs, and labour .....	£650.09
Code reader .....	£12

Total .....£1,406.50

### Contacts:

**EBC Brakes**

01604 286028, [www.ebcbrakesdirect.com](http://www.ebcbrakesdirect.com)

**Autotest**

0208 974 1246, [www.autotest.co.uk](http://www.autotest.co.uk)

## NEXT MONTH

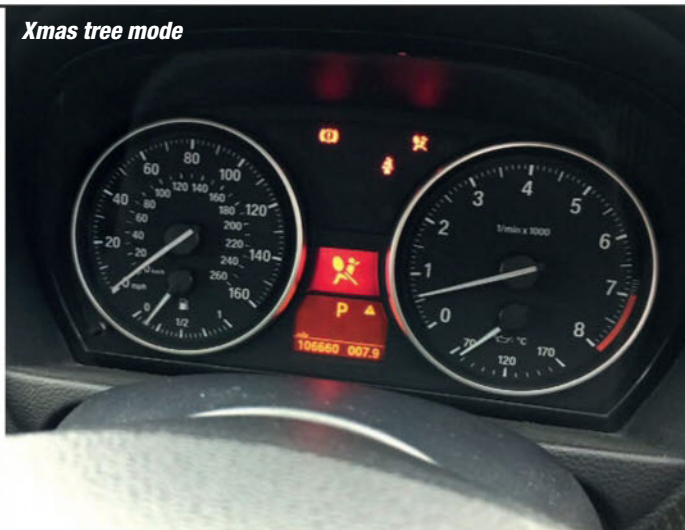
*A noisy exhaust!*



*A box full of power*



*Xmas tree mode*



*Good looking, good-driving*

## JULES' BMW 335i

**AFTER A FEW MONTHS OF PROBLEMS, THE 335i IS NOW FINALLY FULLY RECHARGED**

If you're anything like me, you'll hate dash-warning lights. Now BMWs with early iDrive systems love a warning message. They warn you if it's cold, if you're low on petrol and if your breath smells – OK that might not be strictly true, but you get the message (no pun intended).

Now, I'm not going to lie, I've probably done less than 750 miles in the car this year, and have really neglected it over the past few months. So when I fired it up the other week and the dash looked like a Christmas tree, I feared the worst.

It was only when I was chatting to my local mechanic that he mentioned it was probably due to the battery. I was keen to tell him I didn't think it was because it was relatively new and held a good charge. But as it turns out, he was spot on. You see, one dead cell is all it takes to trigger some sensors and send your BM's dash into Christmas tree mode.

So without further ado, I logged onto [www.batterymegastore.co.uk](http://www.batterymegastore.co.uk), typed in my reg and a bunch of suitable batteries

popped up. Some started at as little as £70, but I went for their all singing and dancing Hankook SA58020.

This thing has some serious cranking power. It's perfect for a car running air ride and where the compressors draw on the power from ignition. It'll also have no issue with the pending below-zero weather conditions and it won't be bothered that the car isn't used on a daily basis.

It arrived the very next morning and I didn't waste anytime getting it plugged in. The next step was to get the codes cleared and then to see if the BMW's dash would be fault free after a quick spin.

And I'm very glad to report it was and still is. Lovely stuff.

This good news also inspired me to get off my arse and have the car photographed for its upcoming feature.

Yup, that's right readers, after three happy years of ownership, I think I'm finally done on this project. I've got a car itch that I've wanted to scratch for a very long time. Watch this space.



*Full shoot coming next month*

### THIS MONTH

#### PARTS

Hankook SA58020 Battery ..... £118  
Next Day Delivery ..... £7.50

Total ..... £125.50

#### Contacts

[www.batterymegastore.co.uk](http://www.batterymegastore.co.uk)

### NEXT MONTH

*The 335i gets the full FC feature treatment.*



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# GREEN WITH ENVY

*Far from being just a Golf in a frock, the Mk1 VW Scirocco is now among the most sought after '70s VWs of them all, and Frederik Ceulemans can claim to have built one of Europe's best*

It's hard to fully appreciate the impact cars like the first-generation VW Scirocco had on the automotive landscape when launched back in 1974. Its wedge-y shape and Giugiaro-penned lines weren't just stunning, they looked quite unlike anything else you were likely to encounter on the road at the time (unless you lived down the road from Maranello). It didn't matter that the Mk1 Scirocco was little more than a Golf in a (very) pretty dress, its stunning styling ensured that it sold like the proverbial hot-cakes, taking off where the Karmann Ghia left off and spawning a line of cars that continues to this day.

Fast forward over four decades and the Mk1 looks, if anything, even better. The same styling which enabled it to stand out amongst its boxy automotive peers when new, enables it to do the same amongst modern, rounded offerings, helped along by its comparative rarity of course. That being said, not all Mk1 Sciroccos are created equal, and though we've had the pleasure of featuring a good number of them over the years, we think that the example you see here, owned and built by Frederik Ceulemans, is easily one of the best yet.

Modifying a car like this is a skill all of its own, and it can be a deceptively tricky undertaking. Yes, there's no denying that the base car is a stunning bit of kit in standard fettle. But that just means you – well, Frederik – have your work cut out trying to improve upon it! Put simply, there's a hell of a lot of scope for taking things too far, over egging the pudding or otherwise ruining a rapidly appreciating classic when it comes to modifying a Mk1 Scirocco. Remember it was designed by Giorgetto Giugiaro, a man whose CV includes the likes of the Ferrari 250GT, DeLorean, Aston Martin DB4... and the FSO Polenez.

The need to do the Scirocco's styling justice probably explains why Frederik has stuck to the old adage of 'keep it simple, stupid', with something approaching religious fervour, and also why his car looks so utterly flawless.

"I bought the car back in 2008, but it wasn't in a great way back then. In fact I only settled on this car as it was an early TS model from '75, hence the small indicators at the front," Frederik recalls."



## WILD CARD: VW SCIROCCO

*Custom dashboard, bespoke leathers, Porsche seats and seat-belts*



While it might have been blessed with factory good looks, the original Scirocco was far from an automotive powerhouse in terms of outright grunt. Which is why, just over a year after he bought it, Frederik set out to imbue it with some much needed shove. The omens started off very, very well indeed. Frederik managed to track down a Mk3 Golf fitted with an ABF engine. So far, so ordinary. But what made this such a coup was the fact the car had covered a grand total of 0km from new. It'd been used as a demo vehicle by a school for many years, and had presumably been treated to numerous rebuilds.

"The problems began when I handed the engine conversion over to a local garage, and it soon became apparent they had no idea what they were doing. It took a year and a half of back and forth with next to no progress being made, and in the end I got fed up and collected the car."

It's worth pointing out that at that time Frederik had no idea how to get the ABF engine into its new home. But what he did have was boundless enthusiasm, a willingness to learn and some close mates, and all of this conspired to help him complete the swap in far less time than the so-called professional he'd formally entrusted it to. Along the way he discovered all manner of horrors, including a badly butchered wiring loom which looked like it had been flung in and forgotten about, with one wire dangling over the red-hot exhaust manifold.

The increase in power prompted Frederik to invest in some more capable brakes, and though the stoppers in question, a Golf G60 setup front and back, went on with no trouble, the same could not be said for



the wheels. Said brakes were simply too large for the HTNs to swallow!

"That wasn't so much of a problem as it gave me the perfect opportunity to buy new wheels, a set of 7.5x16in BBS RFs," muses Frederik. "No, the real issues began when only two of the wheels turned up! It was made all the worse as my neighbour signed for them, so the delivery company washed their hands of the problem and refused to help. I've never seen the wheels since."

Putting aside the fact some light-fingered delivery man was probably rolling around on half a set of BBS, Frederik pressed on with the build, borrowing a set of his brother's RFs for the rear. Only to find the Scirocco was now too low to move without clouting its sump on anything taller than an ant with ideas above its station. Which explains why, some years ago, Frederik's Scirocco was treated to a complete air-ride setup.

The end of summer 2011 marked an important milestone in Frederik's ownership of this car, the point where he finally deemed himself ready to undertake a complete strip down and rebuild, having spent the previous three and a bit years collecting rare Scirocco parts left, right and centre.

"I'd been looking around for parts my car was missing, or bits that were hard to come by, ever since I bought it. So I jumped in and started stripping it right back to a bare shell," Frederik recalls. "It then went to Marc Loncke's bodyshop for welding, sanding and, eventually, a new coat of its original colour, Palma Metal."

Frederik admits that despite being madly in love with the colour the Scirocco now sports, it wasn't his first choice. Indeed, he was all set to have the car painted in a shade of gloss white until the bodyshop sprayed the boot in the stunning shade of OEM green it now sports, changing Frederik's mind at a stroke. He fell head over heels with the Palma Green paint there and then, and hasn't looked back.





“There were points where I had literally  
no idea what I was doing”



*Turbocharged 2.0 16v ABF  
pumps out 250bhp*





## WILD CARD: VW SCIROCCO

Frederik's devotion to his Scirocco is impressive, but what's even more so is the amount he now knows about his car. By his own admission he was far from an expert when he first bought. The learning curve that both he and the classic VW have been on reached its apex when he began to rebuild it, using the pristine, freshly painted shell as a base – no mean feat when you consider the scale of the project, not to mention his desire to end up with a show-stopping Scirocco he could drive to Wörthersee further down the line.

"There were points where I had literally no idea what I was doing," he laughs. "I can't stress how intense the learning process was, but it means I now know every single part of my car in huge detail, not to mention the satisfaction which comes from having done almost all the work myself."

Further evidence of Frederik's near fanatical commitment to perfection, if indeed it were needed, can be found in his sense of disappointment once he'd finally bolted the Scirocco back together. Whereas most of us would be content to pat ourselves on the back and bask in the glory of a job well done, Frederik instead took one look at the freshly installed engine and decided his work was far from finished.

"I really wasn't happy with how it looked once I saw the engine back in the bay. It was completely matt black and I knew I wanted something a little more special, so I turned to Davy De Rycke of RS-Tuning and asked for 'a few' parts to be covered in carbon... That's where things got a little out of hand," laughs Frederik.

By this point Frederik's self-imposed Wörthersee deadline was looming large, and with much of the build still to complete, he and his friends doubled down on their project, working through the night to give the Scirocco a fighting chance to make it to the show.

"I got to the show, just," he laughs. "I couldn't believe how well received it was by everyone there, the standard of cars there is so, so high. It was a fantastic feeling to have made it there successfully though, the attention the car got was just the icing on the cake."

Again, many lesser modifying aficionados would've been content to rest on their laurels having built a flawless, utterly spotless Scirocco like this, but not Frederik. No, since the car's debut at Wörthersee he's carried out a number of modifications, most notably a turbo conversion. He even went so far as to source another ABF 16v to use as its base, carefully removing and storing his original, sub-10,000 mile one for future use! The new engine doesn't want for spec, either. It boasts a forged bottom end, uprated fasteners, a suitably lowered compression ratio... and a thumping 250bhp. Plenty in a car which tips the scales at just 960kg. We'd say that Europe's finest Scirocco is in rude health! **FL**

*The 'Rocco sits on a custom air-ride system*

## TECH SPEC: VW SCIROCCO

### ENGINE

VW 2.0 16v ABF with Wiseco 83mm 8.5:1 pistons; turbo conversion; Integrated Engineering con-rods; high performance bearings; uprated fuel pump and fuel pressure regulator; Audi S2 inlet manifold; custom front mounted intercooler and radiator; shaved engine bay with various carbon details.

### CHASSIS

High gloss polished 7.5x17in BBS RS; Porsche 996 front brake setup with custom calliper carriers; custom air-ride setup.

### EXTERIOR

1975 Scirocco TS resprayed in OEM 'Palma Metal' green; Porsche door handles; carbon bumper detailing.

### INTERIOR

Custom dashboard with bespoke leather interior; black CAE shifter; Porsche seats and Porsche 356 seat-belts; Raid 28cm steering wheel with snap-off boss.



*High gloss polished  
7.5x17in BBS RS*







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## ADAM MUSGROVE'S CIVIC TYPE R

**FC says:** Anyone who reckons there's an age where you should stop tinkering with modified cars should take a good long look at our proud owner Adam here. "I'm 48 years old now, and my missus told me I could do with a hobby, so here it is!" He smiles as he explains what's been done to his beautifully crafted Milano Red EP3.

"It was purchased completely standard two years ago, and if you ask me I'm only halfway through the build," he reveals, with the car already sporting a host of top bits that help to make it even more fun to drive and own. Aiding performance and adding to that epic VTEC soundtrack are comprehensive intake and exhaust systems, starting with an Injen induction kit up front and concluding with a

full stainless steel exhaust out back. The chassis is also comprehensively re-worked with the likes of Tenzo R springs which offer up a 50mm drop, along with some Progress suspension goodies to really help stiffen things up when Adam's giving it the beans around the twisties.

In the styling department, some iconic six-spoke Japan Racing alloys bring out a little more aggression on the outside, while in Adam's sporty cockpit the upgrades revolve around a Revo short shifter and Skunk2 weighted gearknob to ensure that close-ratio 'box is a hoot to operate.

We'll be keeping tabs on this pocket rocket to see where Adam takes it next.

### SPEC: CIVIC TYPE R

#### MAIN MODS

Injen cold air intake; Toyosports manifold; Japspeed sports cat; M2 Motorsport exhaust system; polished engine components; Tegiwa strut brace; Progress rear roll bar and links; grooved brake discs with EBC Yellow Stuff pads; Tenzo R lowering springs; Japan Racing alloys; Sony ICE; Revo short-shifter; Skunk2 weighted gearknob.







## CHRIS REEVELL'S FIESTA ST

**FC says:** Who said hot hatches can't be classy? With some tasty, fully custom modifications, Chris has managed to inject a whole lot more sophistication into his sumptuous Fiesta ST here, while ensuring it still gives him a massive smile as he nails it down a B-road.

A vinyl-wrapped roof and wing mirrors tie in nicely to those Bola alloys that're finished off in a custom grey colour, with other touches like those painted headlights, huge honeycomb grille, new front splitter and rear diffuser fins also helping to bring out this car's muscular rally heritage nicely while never over-stepping the mark.

That boosted motor has been treated to a hefty Forge intercooler, as well as equally-as-capable intake and exhaust upgrades, all tied into a Revo re-map to allow a seriously impressive amount of horses to make their way through the car's front wheels. Sat on some functional BC Racing coilovers and those frankly colossal Tarox brakes lurking behind the new alloys, we get the feeling this is one machine that'd put more exotic metal to shame on the right road! **Photos courtesy of George Duxbury**

### SPEC: FIESTA ST

#### MAIN MODS

Stage 2 Revo software; Forge Motorsport intercooler; ITG induction kit; 2.5in custom Tony Banks cat-back exhaust system; BC Racing coilovers; Bola B1 alloys in custom grey; Tarox big brake kit; painted headlights; wrapped roof, wing mirrors and lower lip in grey; TRC splitter; rear diffuser fins; custom re-trimmed seats; gloss black plastics all-round; full honeycomb grille; wing raisers.



## CRAIG ROWLEY'S FOCUS ST

**FC says:** We always love seeing a nicely modified version of one of the most tuneable hot hatches out there in recent years: Ford's wonderful Focus ST. And Craig's example certainly doesn't disappoint.

The car's boosted 5-pot lump is now rocking over 330bhp, thanks to a big list of premium upgrades. Starting with some engine block strengthening work to ensure the unit could handle more power, Craig's then gone straight to the top with a Group A induction kit, huge 3in Scorpion exhaust system, an Airtec intercooler and uprated fuelling system.

The styling has been kept refreshingly reserved, with the red body lines sharpened up with a Zunsport front grille and custom rear diffuser the only clues as to the huge amount of power that's now on tap.

"I call the car ChriSTine!" life-long FC fan Craig laughs, explaining to us that although it may not be the most modified example out there, it's more than perfect for his needs. Good effort, Sir!

### SPEC: FOCUS ST

#### MAIN MODS

Forge Motorsport recirculation valve; RS ECU holder; block-strengthening modifications; AS inlet manifold plenum; Group A induction kit; 3in induction top pipe; 3in silicon turbo-to-crossover pipe; 440cc fuel injectors; Turbosmart turbo actuator; 3in downpipe and Scorpion exhaust system; RS clutch and flywheel; Airtec stage 3 intercooler; Mod XRS stage 2 re-map; rear diffuser; Zunsport front lower grille.





## CONNOR DARKINGS' VW BORA

**FC says:** It may be one of the coolest Boras we've seen in recent times, with its Air Lift suspension, Porsche wheels and big R32 brake upgrade helping it to stand out from the crowd. But that's not the main reason we love this car, as its rather inspirational owner Connor explains...

"It's an escape from reality for me as I suffer from cerebral palsy which mainly affects my legs," our young hero begins. "I've had numerous surgeries on my legs to improve my walking condition, but doctors told me my chance of driving manual cars was slim. This hasn't stopped me settling for a manual, even if the race clutch I've added does make it pretty hard to drive! I won't let anything put a cap on my disability."

Be sure to keep an eye out for this beautiful 1.8T-powered saloon at a show or on Connor's instagram (@Borair95), and be sure to have a chat with its incredible owner. We salute you, Connor! Photos courtesy of Ross Humphries (@rhumphries.photo)

### SPEC: VW BORA

#### MAIN MODS

Air Lift V2 air suspension system; 18in Porsche 996 Cup III alloys; full R32 Golf brake setup; Darkside front-mount intercooler; Darkside single-mass flywheel; Sachs SRE clutch; turbo-back straight-through exhaust system; custom re-map.



### SPEC: CIVIC TYPE R

#### MAIN MODS

Full Longlife exhaust system; re-sprayed bronze alloys with carbon fibre centre caps; Samauri carbon fibre lip splitter; Apex lowering springs; green 'Type R' details throughout; green 'eagle eye' running lights; carbon fibre-wrapped B-pillars and boot strip; matt black sunstrip; wind deflectors; Password JDM green washer engine dress-up kit; K&N Typhoon induction kit; Mugen oil cap; bronze battery clamp; tow hook; carbon-fibre roof diffuser fins; ASR subframe strengthening plate; green interior LED lighting; bronze interior trim.



## MATT HARKUS' CIVIC TYPE R

**FC says:** Seeing as he only picked up this Civic around six months ago in a completely standard condition, we get the impression young Matt here hasn't been hanging around with adding his own personal touch to it!

Going with a green-and-bronze theme to set off the car's Nighthawk Black bodywork is a sure-fire way to set this beast apart from the other Type Rs out there, with both the interior and exterior receiving a raft of upgrades.

Let's start with those wheels - one of the first parts of the car Matt got sprayed in this memorable bronze copper hue - which are contrasted nicely with those bright green callipers underneath. Sticking with the green theme, some 'eagle eye'-style daytime running lights up front look the business when you see this mean machine coming towards you in the dark! Inside, LED lighting in the same green colour scheme greets you as you enter the sporty cabin, too.

Matt's opted for a Longlife exhaust system to free up a few more ponies from that K20 motor - with power estimated to have risen to an impressive 215bhp now - helped along by some Apex springs and an ASR strengthening plate underneath to ensure this thing handles as well as it goes.

A proud member of south Wales' Outcast Society Car Club, Matt tells us that most of the work on the car was undertaken by his local Outcast Customs garage. Top job!

### SHOW US WHAT YOU'VE GOT!

Here's your chance to show off both your ride and your photography skills in the pages of FC. To enter your car just open a fresh new email, put 'Readers' Rides Submission' in the subject line and send us a few pics of the best bits (larger than 1MB with no ghosting or logos, and you must have the photographer's permission) along with a short spec and a paragraph telling us why your motor deserves to adorn these hallowed pages. Pop the whole lot over to [jules.truss@kelseymedia.co.uk](mailto:jules.truss@kelseymedia.co.uk) and we'll do the rest.



## Quotes of SEMA:



**James from EBC Brakes:** "You boys want a fried Oreo?"

**Midge:** "A fried what? That's disgusting."

**James:** "Is that a no then?"

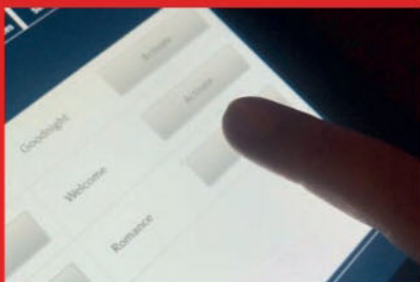
**Midge:** "Don't be silly. Give it here."

**Aria check-in girl:** "You guys have a lovely suite with a view and a queen-size bed perfect for any couple. Enjoy your stay."

**Midge:** "Er, come again love? We'll take two beds thanks. We're having a row."

**Jules:** "Man, that was a bad fart. Good job it's a non-smoking room or you'd blow yourself up."

**Midge:** "For fuck's sake Jules. You're not supposed to have weapons in the hotel – you should have left your arse at the door."



**Midge:** "Julian, can you please stop hitting romantic mode. I can't take any more soft jazz."

**Midge:** "I better not get stuck next to that fat fucker for 11-hours on the way back."

**Jules:** "What you saying?"

**Midge:** "No, not you sausage. The other fat fucker."

**Airport Security:** "Sir, you've been selected for a random search."

**Midge:** "Again? This is my third RANDOM search today and I haven't even got out of Gatwick!"



**Jules:** "My pants have shrunk."

**Midge:** "Jules stop stretching my bloody pants!"

**Midge:** "That bloke over there looks like G."

**Jules:** "What, because he's old and ginger?"

**Midge:** "What more do you want?"

**Jules:** "Fair point."



## The Hard Slog

We haven't read Midge's SEMA report just yet, but you can bet your arse he's had a good old whinge about having to walk miles and miles every day. Still, he won't be lying. Here's a snap from an average day at the Las Vegas Convention Centre... and it takes four of 'em to actually get round it! Yep, we're not sure what's more amazing here, that our boys made it that far, or the fact the little fat one actually owns a Fitbit to record it!

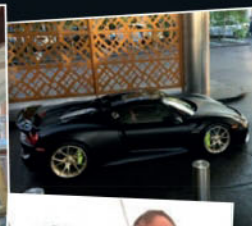


## Expensive Tastes

This may look pretty much like a normal glass of whiskey, but no. This stuff must be pretty damn special because they see fit to charge 38 quid a shot... even though we could have flown to Scotland and got a whole bottle of the same stuff for less than that. You can do Vegas on a budget of course. But it has to be a bloody big one!

## Viva Las SEMA!

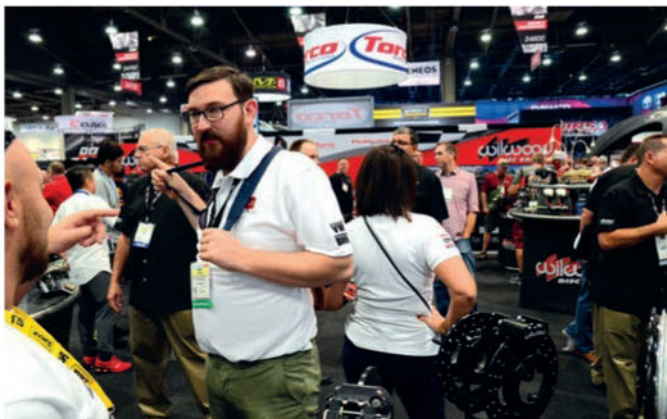
We've raided the boy's phones to see what else they got up to and it appears to be all manner of weird and wonderful shite. This lot sums up the randomness of Vegas. Winner, winner, chicken dinner and all that.



## Spot the Difference

Same bar in the MGM Grand, same stools, same beer, same sunglasses. Shit even Midge's T-shirt looks pretty much the same to us. Our boys may not know much, but they certainly know what they like. That'll be the beer.





## Cheers Guys

As always we have to say a big thank you to our ads peeps, Sarah and Martin, who do all the hard work behind the scenes at SEMA. If we're honest, Jules and Midge spend their time wandering about trying to look pretty, seeking out cars and products to write about, and skiving off as early as possible to find the nearest drinking establishment, blackjack table, or ideally both. Our advertising professionals however, have to speak to the clients, sort out all the upcoming adverts and manage the company credit card that actually pays for our boys and their dodgy business expenses. For that guys, we salute you and made sure Jules and Midge got the beers in. Although you're still paying, obviously.



## Top Room Service

One of our Jules' favourite bits about Vegas is they have the finest room service in the world. You can order pretty much anything you want, presumably even some visual stimulation for a good old-fashioned hand-shandy. At least we know what he got up to for the rest of the evening when Midge got drunk and fell asleep at 7.30. Some top salad dodging there too mate!



## The Art of Shopping

It has to be said that our Midge is a bit of a girl when it comes to shopping. He absolutely loves buying all the designer shit that he's far too old to actually wear. This year though, he decided to "reign it in", avoid his usual 120-dollar excess baggage fine and actually keep it under the magical 20kg. Just about. Of course, this doesn't sound all that impressive, but he did only have eight kilos on the way out.

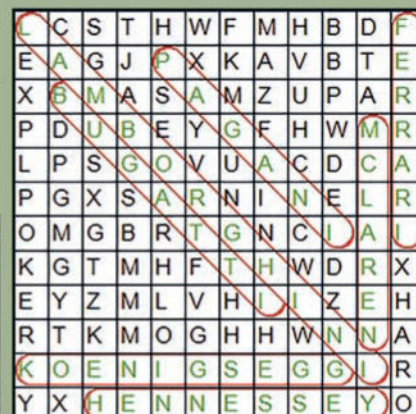
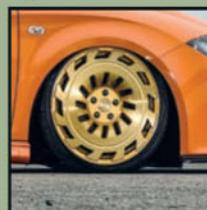


## Quiz results from page 8:

### WORD SEARCH:

Ferrari, Bugatti, Lamborghini, Koenigsegg, Paganì, McLaren and Hennessey (bonus point for that one)

- Q1) Radi8 R8T12  
Q2) Golf Mk5  
Q3) BMW E92



## BLAST FROM THE PAST - ISSUE 338 FEBRUARY 2014

In this issue four years ago...

- Proof SEMA has always been huge... and not a LB GT-R in sight!
- Our FC Awards kicked off with the winner of the best rack (or that's how we remember it anyway).
- Jay's 207 GT picked up yet another trophy, and a full-on cover feature to boot.
- Our very own Jules had his BMW E46 330D on the feature list, and very nice it was too.
- £150-grand Sierra Cossie track toy kicked some serious arse.
- You don't see too many Cav Turbos these days, and certainly not like Dave's here!





NEXT MONTH IN FAST CAR\* WE...

# ...see in 2018 With absolute awesomeness



## Feature Cars:

UK's Best BM 335i (Really? Is that because it's yours Jules? – G)  
Stanced Honda EK  
Smoking Nissan PS13  
Orange SEAT Leon  
Mental Mk2 Golf  
Retro-tastic Mitsi Starion



## Out There:

### Ultimate Stance

We head to Telford to see some stanced motors. Wahooo

### Special Feature:

All our features are special but we'll be doing an extra special one next month. We just don't know what it is yet.

### Plus:

Product tests, Carnography, Fast Projects, and loads of other cool stuff



## #391 On Sale Friday January 5th



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